

Let's Dance!

THE MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING **3** FEBRUARY 2024



FOLK DANCING BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER



For their story, and many more, see p. 8.

Marian and Ned Gault, married 1962, still together in 2024.

Let's Dance!

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The Federation's Promotion Fund is available to Federation members and clubs, in the form of a grant or a loan, to promote a specific dance event or folk dance in general. Read more about this fund and download an application at www.folkdance.com under the **Services** tab.

The Federation's Scholarship Fund provides financial assistance to dancers wishing to attend dance workshops and dance camps. Read more about this fund and download an application at www.folkdance.com under the **Services** tab.

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To post dance event flyers on the Federation's website, email: webmaster@folkdance.com

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The deadline for *Let's Dance!* is the first day of the month prior to the date of publication. We welcome submissions, letters and comments from our readers. Please send to Loui Tucker, Editor (editor@folkdance.com). Opinions expressed in *Let's Dance!* are not necessarily those of the Folk Dance Federation or of the Editor.

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WELCOME OUR NEW FEDERATION MEMBERS

The Oak Folk Dancers – Soulsbyville, CA
Laurel and Dennis Brown – Houston, TX
North/South Teachers' Seminar

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Ulrike Narins

When we dance, we enjoy the movement, the music, the sense of accomplishment, and the company of our fellow dancers. We also associate certain dances with both interesting moments and cherished experiences. I would like to present those kinds of memories from my life as a folk dancer, and I'll do so over two columns, in alphabetical order.

Ba La (Israeli mixer): While discussing something with my son Lothar, I responded to his comment with an emotional "Ay-ay-ay!" He immediately started singing "ay-ay-ay" as it is sung in one of our dances, but we could not figure out which dance it was. The next time we went to Changs, we asked Craig Blackstone, our teacher, for the name of the dance. After thinking for a bit, he told us it was Ba La. The "ay-ay-ay" comes two minutes into the dance.

Besof Ma'agal (Israeli couple dance): I had a hard time remembering the name of this dance until Lothar came up with a funny way. The German word "besoffen" means "drunk," and "mir egal" means "I don't care." So Besof Ma'agal sounds like "Besoffen? Mir egal!" which would mean "Drunk? I don't care!"

Ciuleandra (Romania): Whenever we dance this, I hear Craig's singing, "She forgot the baby eggs" or "She forgot to lay the eggs." Although this is a Romanian song, some phrases sound similar to these English words. If you want to see the whole song interpreted as English, go to YouTube and type in "*She forgot to lay the eggs*"—*Ciuleandra misheard lyrics* in the search box.

De Secerat (Romania): At the beginning of the second pattern, I always hear Craig's voice saying "looong grapevine." Although I know this dance very well, these inner instructions do not seem to go away.

De Valse Zeeman (The Netherlands, couples in a circle): When I learned this dance, I saw Angel turning in the first pattern while holding her left hand behind her back. I thought that was what all followers should do. When I checked with her,

she said she was just holding her long braid so it wouldn't whip someone in the face as she turned!

Eastbourne Rover

(English country dance for three couples): For the first time in this dance, I agreed to be a leader. To prepare for this unfamiliar role, I watched another leader do the poussette. Unfortunately, my observation did not predict correctly how I needed to move! I tried to push my partner when I should have pulled. I soon corrected my mistake and realized that it is better to either watch more of the pattern or allow myself to be guided by the flow of the dance.

Holech Uva (Israel): Lothar and I learned this dance at an Officers Ball. After that, we had scant opportunities to dance it, but every time we could, the same thing always happened to me: the Holech Uva music would come on, and I did not recognize it. Lothar unflinchingly came to get me, saying, "Mom, you know this dance!" and then it would slowly come back to me. Now that I have finally know the dance well, Lothar and I look at each other when we hear Holech Uva and one of us will say "Mom, you know this dance!"

Hora Nuntasilor (Romania): I vividly remember the late Laila Messer leading this dance. In fact, at Changs we still call it "Laila's dance." With great enthusiasm, she always grabbed her husband or a newcomer to join the line.

Idam ne Idam (Macedonia/Bulgaria): Every time we do this dance, I hear the late Lillian Eng singing "Idam ne Idam" with a loud, high voice.

Joc Bătrânesc de la Niculițel (Romania): Lothar and I worked hard to remember the steps to this dance while dancing in our host's garden in Okazaki, Japan. It took us almost the whole dance to get the steps right.

I hope this brings a smile to your face and helps you remember touching or funny moments when dancing. I'll present more memories next month!



Jim Gold International Folk Tours 2024

**Our trips are for folk dancers, non-dancers
and anyone with a love of travel, culture, and adventure**

ISRAEL: March 3-13

Haifa, Safed, Golan Heights.
Led by Lee Friedman
Guided by Joe Freedman

WESTERN CANADA: April 11-23,

2024 Calgary, Banff, Vancouver.
Led by Cathie Donnel-Dunkel
With Sonia Dion and Christian Florescu

EASTERN CANADA: June 28-July 10

2024 Montreal, Quebec, Saint John,
Halifax, Charlottetown.
Led by Richard Schmidt

ALBANIA, GREECE, MACEDONIA

and KOSOVO: May 22-June 3-5
Tirana, Durres, Vloa Folk Festival,
Kruja, Gjirokaster, Saranda, Berat,
Lake Prespa, Ochrid, Kosovo extension.
Led by Lee Otterholt
Guided by Kliti Zika

BULGARIA and Black Sea Coast

July 22-August 4, (4-8).
Sofia, Plovdiv, Bansko, Veliko Turnovo,
Varna. Led by Ventsi Milev
With Bulgarian folk dance teacher Niki
Enchev, and musician Ventsi Andonov

ROMANIA: Sept 29-Oct 13

Bucharest, Brasov, Sibiu, Cluj, Sighet
Marmatiei
Led by Nancy 3. Hoffman
Guided by Virginia O'Neil

GREECE: Oct.18-30

Athens, Nauplia, Sparta, Olympia,
Delphi, Meteora, Thessalonika
Led by Lee Otterholt.
Guided by Maroula Konti

SCANDINAVIA: June 18-July 1

Oslo, Gothenburg,
Helsingborg. (Elsinore),
Copenhagen
Led by Lee Otterholt

IRELAND: August 3-15

Galway, Connemara, Aran
islands, Kerry, Cork, Blarney,
Dublin
Led by Lee Friedman
Guided by Kay Cleary

SPAIN: Sept 12-25

Malaga, Cadiz, Seville, Cordoba,
Granada

PERU with Nazca and Peruvian Amazon: May 20-29

Lima, Cusco, Machu Picchu,
Puno, Sacred Valley, Lake
Titicaca, Peruvian Amazon,
Nazca extensions.
Led by Martha Tavera

BRAZIL: Oct 21-Nov 1

Rio de Janeiro, Salvador,
Iguassu Falls.
Led by Hilary Almeida



TOUR REGISTRATION: Reserve my place! \$200 per person deposit.

Register online at: www.jimgold.com Jim Gold International, Inc.

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Calendar of Events

We reserve the right to edit all submissions; we assume no responsibility for accuracy.
Additional events can be found at www.folkdance.com (Community tab).

- FEBRUARY 10** **FESTIVAL OF THE OAKS.** Live Oak Park, 1301 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley. 1-9 pm. \$34 for the entire event. Dance Workshop with John Morovich 1:30-4 pm; optional dinner (\$10) 4:15-5:15 pm; dance party 5:15-9 pm. Free refreshments. Costume sale! Sponsored by Berkeley Folk Dancers. Info: rg94610@gmail.com or [see ad on p. 22](#).
- FEBRUARY 10** **CAFÉ SHALOM MONTHLY ISRAELI DANCE PARTY.** Congregation Am Tikvah, 625 Brotherhood Way, San Francisco. 7:30-11:30 pm. \$10. Info: udy@yahoo.com or 669-444-1284.
- FEBRUARY 11** **PENINSULA COUNCIL'S MONTHLY PARTY.** Valentine's Day theme. St. Bede's Church Hall, 2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park. 3:30-6:30 pm. \$10. Info: adony408@gmail.com. Note that the usual Saturday party was shifted to Sunday to allow dancers to enjoy both the Festival of the Oaks and the Peninsula Council's monthly party.
- MARCH 1-3** **LAGUNA FESTIVAL.** Laguna Woods Clubhouse 2, 24112 Moulton Parkway, Laguna Woods. Teachers: Gergana Panova and Roberto Bagnoli. [See ad on p. 15](#).
- APRIL 20** **BLOSSOM FESTIVAL.** Save the date! City College of San Francisco. 1-5 p.m. Details coming soon!
- APRIL 26-28** **ROBERTO BAGNOLI DANCE WORKSHOP (Boulder, Colorado).** The Avalon Ballroom, 6185 Arapahoe Road, Boulder, Colorado. Sponsored by Boulder International Folk Dancers. Info: boulderfolkdancers.org.
- MAY 17-19** **STATEWIDE FESTIVAL.** Newark Pavilion, 6430 Thornton Avenue, Newark. Featured teachers: Yannis Konstantinou (Greek/Macedonian) and Cesar Garfiaz (Salsa Rueda). [See flyer and registration form on pp. 13-14](#). Sign up early for the best deal. The date for reserving a room at the Chase Suite Hotel to get their best rate (\$159/suite/night) has been extended to early March!



Let Us Know About Your Upcoming Event!

If your club has scheduled an event, why not tell our dancing community about it? Two of the most efficient ways to do this are to send information and any flyer you have created to –

Loui Tucker at loui@louisucker.com so she can get it on the *Let's Dance!* magazine Calendar of Events, and

Kevin Greek at greek1@ix.netcom.com so he can get it posted on the folkdance.com online calendar.

THE FAMILY PHOTO ALBUM

Beth Berezovsky and Nilesch Shah danced Ada's Kujawiak #1 at the Peninsula Folk Dance Council's Christmas Day party in Menlo Park.



Douce Massenkoff danced with Owen Saxton at the New Year's Eve party in Palo Alto.



Cornelia Ghafur and Andy Partos shared a moment at Berkeley Folk Dancers Birthday Ball in January. Andy is dressed for the theme, Come Fly With Me!



Lon and Hollis Radin dressed up for the Saratoga Folk Dancers' Black & White Ball in December.



Udy Gold (above, right) with his daughter Keren and son Ori enjoyed dancing together at Café Shalom's Hanukkah party in December in San Francisco.

Photos by L. Tucker and C. Dickey.

Dancing in the New Year 2023-24

by Craig Blackstone

Photos by L. Tucker and C. Dickey.

A great group of dancers gathered together for an evening of food, fun, fellowship and fundraising at the 2023-24 Moveable Feet New Year's Eve party, held again this year at All Saints Episcopal Church in Palo Alto. Lucy Chang started fundraising for Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties beginning in December 2017 by linking it to the Moveable Feet party that month. This fundraising event is her legacy and was moved to the New Year's Eve party in 2021. It has become a well-attended annual event that is an opportunity to honor Lucy's memory, celebrate the new year, and give back to our community.

This year the event included both a potluck dinner and over four hours of dancing to our requested favorites. While there was no admission charge, attendees (and non-attending supporters) were encouraged to make contributions to the Second Harvest Food Bank, which provides food to 1 in 6 people throughout Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. The stated goal was to raise \$5000 for the Food Bank, with hopes of perhaps equaling the \$10,000 raised at the 2022-23 New Year's Eve party. Thanks to many generous contributors, those hopes were realized as the prior year's total was surpassed by an additional \$2000, **with contributions totaling \$12,433 at last count.**



Lesley Bone greeted the New Year amid the streamers of Flutter Fetti as 2023 became 2024.

colorful streamers for the final half-hour of dancing as cleanup activities commenced. (The streamers were far easier to clean up than the usual bits of paper confetti!)

Grateful thanks go out to the members of the Moveable Feast team for all their work in organizing and putting on the fundraiser dance party, which was a success in every way possible.



A circle of dancers for La Bastringue filled the room. Cheryl Fuller and John Kast (center) are followed by Annelise Bazar, Mike Giusto (partially hidden), and Ralph Vomaska.

FOLK DANCING BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER

Editor's note: I had so much fun putting this issue together! When I decided to feature the many couples who met at a folk dancing event, I had no idea how many couples would take me up on the offer to share their story, or how heartwarming those stories would be. I am sure you will enjoy reading their stories as much as I did.

Ned and Marian Gault (by Ned)

We met in about 1956 in a folk dance class in the San Jose Adult Education Department taught by my parents Ed and Ruth Gault. Since the class was mainly couples, we, as two of the few single dancers, danced together. When my parents retired in 1959, Marian and I took over and taught the class for many years. We married in 1962 and, 62 years later, we are still a couple, although not dancing much these days.

Our shared interest in folk dance has given us so much – traveling, dancing, and teaching dance around the United States, in several European countries, in Japan, and at Stockton Folk Dance Camp for 27 years, all in addition to our real lives. I am a former semiconductor engineer and high-school chemistry teacher; Marian is a former elementary-school teacher and nationally-known artist. Her artwork appears on the covers of several Stockton Folk Dance Camp syllabi. Marian will be 104 in April this year!



Bruce and Susan Carter (by Bruce)

Both my marriages and Susan's had come apart, our spouses having left for other pastures. Neither of us had ever anticipated the possibility of being single at 50. As a resident of Berkeley, Susan found her way to Ashkenaz, the local dance venue in Berkeley. She was new to folk dancing and found it off-putting that married men would be coming on to her until little wifey came to rein him in!

Separately, I was still in shock from the pronouncement of three months previous, and just visiting my hospitalized office manager. She inquired what I was doing that evening, and suggested that I go out, go dancing or drinking! It was a Saturday evening, and I reluctantly thought about Ashkenaz. It was already late, but I went.

I was eyeing several women of reasonable maturity and saw Susan's big smile lighting her up in the line dancing. I made a point of making conversation with her. She was circumspect about further contact but did give me her phone number. Important note: I was not wearing my wedding ring because just that morning my eldest daughter had said "Dad, she's not coming back! You're not married! Take off that ring!"

The next morning, I called Susan, and we met for a walk in Tilden Park. We discovered more than a few similarities (dancing, singing, grey hair, educated, etc.). We were still legally married at that point, but that didn't stop us from getting to know each other. That was a whirlwind 36 years ago. The beat goes on!



Laurie Reynolds and Trevor Nelson (by Laurie)



Trevor was one of the first people I met when I moved to the Bay Area in 1983. I joined Sierra Singles Folk Dancing almost immediately and started making friends. Trevor and I were always good pals, doing things together when neither of us were dating.

It was in 1996 that we both decided we wanted to have a child together. We each dreamed of having a girl and, lo and behold, our dreams were realized with our beautiful, intelligent, and funny daughter, Rosemary.

John and Jan Nicoara (by John)



I had just come back from a month-long trip to Eastern Europe – Serbia and Romania. It was July 1973, time for Marcel Vinokur’s monthly party at the Menlo Park Recreation Center. As I walked in, Bill Baker hurriedly came toward me.

“John, there are two ladies out on the patio who are interested in your San Jose class.” (I had two classes at the time – my advanced class on the Stanford campus, and the class I inherited from Kathy Kerr, now at a Greek church.) I followed Bill out to the patio and there I saw for the first time the twins Barbara and Janet Long. Having just returned from my Romanian adventure, I was very animated in my description of my trip with my son, Jamie. As we stepped into the party room, Marcel put on Salty Dog Rag, and I began dancing with Jan, who had been particularly interested in my adventures.

In February 1974, at a monthly Saratoga dance event, on a moonlit night down in the Japanese Tea Garden, I proposed to Jan. Ten months later, on November 8, 1974, we were married. We will celebrate our 50th anniversary this coming November.

Diane and Dennis Baker (by Diane)

I met my husband Dennis on a Friday evening in September 1975, at a party given in Laguna Beach held by a fellow folk dancer. Folk dancers from UC Irvine and the Laguna Folk Dancers had been invited to attend the party, as well as colleagues of the organizers who worked at Computer Automation Corporation. One of those colleagues was Dennis.

Recorded music alternated between rock and folk music during the evening. Dennis and I rocked out on the dance floor, but he watched from the sidelines as I danced daichovos, kopanitsas and horas. Later he asked for a date.

We continue to attract onlookers when we dance at parties and weddings. Dennis has danced one hora (in Bukovina) and one contra (Statewide 2023) and is not enticed to follow folk dance sequences. Fortunately, he enjoys attending dance concerts, even serving on the board of a ballet company, takes photos at folk dance festivals, and provides endless hours of tech support. So glad we are dancing through life together!



Kaela Fine and Paul Loewenstein (by Kaela)

Paul Loewenstein and I met on the deck at The Land, also known as Cliff Jenkins’ Weekend Get-Away, which happens twice a year (Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends). The date was August 30, 1997. At the time of this writing, we have been married for 23 years exactly, as today is our wedding anniversary, December 23.

I went to Cliff’s Labor Day weekend for the first time with two friends from Sonoma County, including Debbie Swan, an old girlfriend of Cliff’s. Paul had to go home early on Sunday morning of that weekend because of the flu, but luckily we got each other’s email addresses on Saturday.

It turned out that we both wrote our first emails about a minute apart! We met a few weeks later at the Pelican Inn in Marin County for lunch, a hike, and a swim in the ocean. Since it was during El Niño, the water was warm enough for a swim. We were married about two and a half years later and are still dancing together to this day!

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Craig and Cindy Blackstone (by Craig)

In 1987, I began taking the course in International Folk Dancing taught by Gail Barton at City College of San Francisco. In April of 1990, during my third semester in Gail’s class, City College first hosted the Blossom Festival, and I was one of the dancers in attendance. At the suggestion of Ed Kremers (whom I had previously met in Gail’s class), I went to the Rose Festival held in Santa Rosa during the following month. At that festival, I was introduced to Sam and Jeanie Kermoian, prominent members of the Changs International Folk Dance Club, and I was invited to dance at Changs. I began dancing at Changs in June of 1990, joined the club in August, and have been a regular dancer with the club since then.

Cindy moved to San Francisco in 1991 to work at the Pomeroy Recreation and Rehabilitation Center. She had folk danced for over 10 years in southern California, and she found her way to Mandala in San Francisco. One of the dancers at Mandala was Louise Heatlie, also a member of Changs, and Louise invited Cindy to dance there as well. Cindy accepted the invitation, and in August attended Changs for the first time.

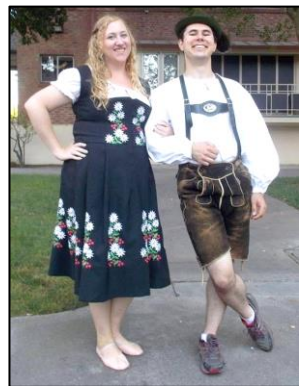
Late in September Cindy and I began dating. By the end of our second date, I was already thinking that Cindy was the girl for me. The more we dated, the more certain I became. I proposed to Cindy in January of 1992, and we were married on April 4 of that year at the Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church in San Francisco, which was where Changs met. We enjoyed a folk dance reception at the church hall, dancing with many of our Changs and City College dance friends.

As a remarkable side note, my parents met and married at the Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church.



Megan Wolf and Jordan Uggla (by Megan)

I met Jordan in 2006, my first year at Stockton Folk Dance Camp, when we were both sixteen years old. He was there on staff with his parents but hadn’t really come to dance. I was there with Al and Teddy Wolterbeek’s teenaged dancers. We were one boy short for the partner dances so, when I discovered



Jordan, a boy our age at camp, I pulled him into dancing with us. My friends and I would knock on his dorm room door every morning to get him up for tango class with us. Jordan and I were paired for a silly tango skit, which is why we have a photo together from that first year we met (right). We became good friends for many years, especially after Jordan’s parents moved the family to Placerville, near my family.



One year after graduating from high school, when I was visiting my family for Thanksgiving, I invited Jordan contra dancing with my family. He gave me a ride home so I could stay for the whole dance, and we decided to go to a drive-in after the dance. We consider that night our first date.

We managed a long distance relationship for a while, with him in Placerville and me in Willits. At Stockton Camp in 2014, we decided to officially become a couple. We’ve been dancing together ever since! We’ve been friends for 17 years, living together for nine years, and we got married in 2023.

Evaonne and John Hendricks (by Evaonne)

John and I met back in the 1970s at folk dancing. We were both attending Humboldt State University, which has recently become Cal Poly Humboldt. We married in June of 1981, not long after we danced together at the Sons of Norway picnic as part of a Scandinavian group dance exhibition. We’re still dancing with the Humboldt Folk Dancers in Arcata, California.



Erika Opper and Jim Horton (by Erika)

Jim Horton and I met at Cafe Shalom in 1980 and bonded over a shared love of Israeli dance, travel, chocolate sundaes, and making sure the waitress at post-Cafe group meals got a good tip. We were married a year later with many folk dancers in attendance and lots of dancing to the music of Hot Borscht. Through the years, we continued traveling and dancing (and enjoying chocolate), sometimes combining them all as we did on a European trip with Dance on the Water.



Just as Jim’s daughters Catherine and Rosanna grew up attending Israeli dancing, Jim and I brought our daughter Naomi to Cafe Shalom, and she now brings her daughter Lucy. In 2012, I started going to San Francisco Dance Circle, which led to the two of us happily joining the welcoming Changs Folk Dancers.

Until his recent move to assisted living, Jim still attended Changs and Cafe Shalom even when he could no longer dance, and much enjoyed socializing, snacking on chocolates and listening to the music.

Martha and Dennis Awdziewicz (by Martha)

My husband Dennis and I were both born on the same day, same month, and same year. I am a few hours older, having been born in the morning in Connecticut while Dennis was born in the afternoon in Chicago.

We were both in graduate school at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, in the late 1960s. I was getting my degree in Slavic Linguistics. Dennis was getting a PhD in Applied Math, so we never would have met because we had no classes in common. We didn’t even have classes in the same buildings! But we would see each other at folk dancing every Monday night.

After we met in graduate school, Dennis finished his PhD and went to teach at Arizona State University in Phoenix. I finished my MA and was working on my PhD and taught for a year at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Virginia. I went back to Brown University to finish my PhD and – as luck would have it – Arizona State was looking for someone to teach Russian language and literature. I applied and was hired. I found my way back to Dennis. Dennis’s folk dance friends in Phoenix said we were meant to be together.



Carlos and Karen Canto (by Carlos)

I believe it was the weekend of July 6, 1980. We were introduced by Sherry Cochran at The Intersection, a folk dance café in southern California. Sherry suggested I ask Karen to dance, and the first dance we did together was a disco!

Karen first learned folk dance in 1969 at The Museum folk dance cafe. She enjoyed all forms of dance, but primarily Bulgarian, Romanian, Scandinavian, and ballroom dances. Karen attended Scottish RSDC camp four times to become certificated as a teacher.

We were married on October 25, 1980, at The Intersection. Family, friends and members of Polski Iskry, a Polish dance troupe, were in attendance. Karen performed with Polski Iskry for two or three years. I joined the group and we performed together for a year. In Karen, I married the equivalent of Ginger Rogers – perhaps not the actor, but the character often portrayed by Ginger.

We had one son, Alex. We moved to Sonora, California, in September 1990. Karen passed away in 2017. I now lead the small but mighty Oak Folk Dancers of Soulsbyville, California.



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SPEAKING OF DANCING

When Hands Hug

by Gigi Jensen

“El abrazo” is the name for the partner hold position when dancing Argentine tango. While it’s most often translated as “the embrace,” it is also the Spanish word for hug. That is an apt description.

Hugs are considered warm greetings reserved for family and friends.

The handshake is the preferred contact for formal occasions such as introductions and sealing contracts. However, a well-formed handshake offers a deeper connection. I dated a guy in college who was a business major. He taught me how to offer and accept a handshake; the mechanics of palm to palm, fingers encircling hands, thumbs wrapped to the back, a warm contact where participants match the pressure of the brief squeeze of 1000-1, 1000-2.

You know what happens when someone hugs you too hard or squeezes your hand painfully. You know what a “why bother” hug or a limp hand feels like to shake. They make for unsatisfactory contact, and certainly hinder good partner connection. When I teach tango, I address the question of how much strength to use to make the embrace by shaking hands with everyone in the class.

Whether you dance in the circle or in a partnership of two, remember that how you offer and accept hands is part of the joy of dancing with others.

Now on a different topic... sort of.

I recently ran across an article published by *USA Today* that made me stop in my tracks. “Americans are lonely and it’s killing them. How the US can combat this new epidemic,” written by Adrianna Rodriguez.⁽¹⁾

The article details the epidemic of loneliness in our country, the causes, and the toll it takes. “Loneliness is detrimental to mental and physical health, experts say, leading to an increased risk of heart disease, dementia, stroke, and premature death,” she writes.

A 2020 Harvard survey found that 61% of adults ages 18 to 25 reported feeling serious loneliness. Even though there’s been quite a bit of attention in the media to this age group on this topic, it still surprised me. I don’t know if the COVID pandemic was in full swing when this study’s conclusions were formed, but in a way it doesn’t matter. If you were lonely going into the pandemic, isolation would have made it worse.

Other populations that self-report high levels of loneliness are those with poor physical and mental health, disabilities, financial insecurity, those who live alone, single parents, and older people. U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy was quoted in the article as saying, “We have to be intentional about building social connections in our life.”

My point is that you, me, all of us, can help combat this epidemic of loneliness. Folk dance is perfect for that. You invite and encourage people to attend a folk dance class or party. Meet up with them there to welcome them and introduce them to the group.

If the person can’t attend an in-person event, point them to a virtual class. It seems counter-intuitive to encourage people to dance alone, but it can be a useful first step to getting them into a community. For them, it’s a low-risk way to find people who welcome them. We have people come to our Dancing with Friends Monday night virtual class simply to be there. For whatever reason (lack of transportation or money, time of day, no nearby dance group, etc.), they feel the need to connect to other people’s smiles and hellos, and they are always welcome.

The best thing to do, in my opinion, is to stretch out our hands to the others and invite them into the circle to dance with us. Loneliness is not always obvious, so invite anyone. Invite them to a double hand hug, as it were. Maybe even an abrazo. It’s in that circle of warmth that we are reminded that loneliness is best battled together.



⁽¹⁾ You can read Adrianna’s article by searching for “Adrianna Rodriguez Americans are Lonely.”

STATEWIDE 2024 FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL Friday-Sunday, May 17-19, 2024



Newark Pavilion, 6430 Thornton Avenue, Newark, CA

Yannis Konstantinou
Greek/Macedonian



Cesar Garfiaz
Salsa Rueda and More



Evening Parties with Orkestar Unbound

Square Dance Hoedown - Sunday Afternoon
(Social, Mainstream and Plus Levels)

Friday night dinner: Mexican
Saturday lunch: Dim Sum
Saturday dinner: Greek
Sunday lunch: Gourmet Burgers

Dance lessons, culture corners, performances, parties

Host Hotel: Chase Suite Hotel
39150 Cedar Blvd., Newark, CA

(Book by 3/1/2024 for special pricing – \$159/room/night – use “folkfed2024”)

Info and register online: statewide.folkdance.com

Registration
form

Statewide Festival 2024 is sponsored by the
Folk Dance Federation of California, a non-profit organization.



STATEWIDE 2024 FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL

May 17 - 19, 2024

Newark Pavilion, Newark, California

[Registration Form](#)

(Please register individually, one form per person)



Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Phone: _____ Name of Group, if any: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

FESTIVAL PACKAGE (Includes ALL workshops and parties (not meals), **\$155 at the door**)

\$135 when payment is received by January 31

\$145 when payment is received by March 31

\$150 when payment is received by April 30 (**final day to preregister**)

All Day events (*ONLY WITH early registration*)

\$50 All day Friday (\$60 at the door)

\$90 All day Saturday (\$100 at the door)

\$50 All day Sunday (\$60 at the door)

Individual Events (*ONLY WITH early registration*) +\$5 each at the door

\$30 Friday special workshop

\$30 Friday evening party \$30 Saturday evening party

\$40 Saturday AM instruction \$40 Saturday PM instruction

\$40 Sunday AM instruction \$15 Sunday afternoon square dance hoedown

(Federation coupons are good for Half day or Evening Party or \$35 discount on Festival Package)

Subtotal: \$ _____

Additional offerings: (meals only available with pre-registration, **___ \$85 for all 4 meals**)

\$30 Mexican dinner Friday with chicken or beef vegetarian

\$25 Chinese dim sum lunch Saturday with meat (seafood) vegetarian

\$30 Greek dinner Saturday with chicken or beef vegetarian

\$25 Gourmet Hamburger lunch Sunday with Angus beef vegetarian

\$25 Festival video access on Google Drive

\$25 Special Statewide T-shirt Size: S, M, L, XL Man Woman Crew neck V-neck

Tax deductible donation \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

To register with this mail-in form: Send with your check (**made payable to Folk Dance Federation**) to:
Statewide Registrar, 153 Race Street, San Jose, CA 95126.

On-line Registration: At statewide.folkdance.com

Visit the Statewide 2024 webpage statewide.folkdance.com for the latest information about schedules, teachers, hotels, restaurants, parking, directions, etc.

Masks are optional and proof of vaccination requirements
will follow CDC, State, and County COVID regulations at the time of the event.
Statewide 2024 is sponsored by the Folk Dance Federation of California, a non-profit organization.

Laguna Folk Dance Festival

March 1-3
2024



Gergana Panova
will teach Bulgarian dances



Roberto Bagnoli
will teach a variety of
international folk dances

JOIN US FOR ANOTHER FUN-FILLED FESTIVAL

Enjoy WORKSHOPS in
Bulgarian and other international dances,
DANCE PARTIES with LIVE MUSIC
by Tzidia and Sans Frontières,
a BALKAN SING-ALONG, UKULELE JAMS,
plus FOOD & WINE, a CONCERT, HAPPY HOURS,
BEACH DANCING (Monday) & MORE!



Melanie Lawson
will lead ukulele jams



In the beautiful Clubhouse 2 Ballroom:
24112 Moulton Parkway, Laguna Woods, CA

For more information & registration, visit www.LagunaInternationalDancers.com
or call Greg at (972) 467-1406

For Laguna Woods residents & their guests. Tell the gate you were invited to the folk dance festival hosted by the Laguna International Dancers (President Miriam Kahn).

NEWS FROM AROUND THE BAY . . .

SIERRA FOOTHILLS – by *Sisene Strehl*

Editor's Note: The Federation welcomes its newest group, the Oak Folk Dancers.

If you live or are visiting in Tuolumne or Calaveras county, there is a place to folk dance year-round.

The newly named Oak Folk Dancers meets every Monday night at the Dance Castle in Columbia.

Beginners dance 7-8 pm, Intermediates from 8-9 pm, although most people stay for both hours. We also enjoy meeting for pre-dance potlucks or occasional restaurant gatherings at 5:30 pm.

When the weather warms up, there is a spacious outdoor area for dancing. We are a welcoming group, with a fun sense of play. We have teenagers to retired folk, generally 11-15 people attending. Info: Dance Castle at thedancecastle.com or Carlos at carlisimo55@att.net.



The Oak Dancers of Columbia.

RAZZMATAZZ – by *Marilyn Smith*

We held our annual Christmas/Holiday folk dance party on December 9 at Monroe Hall.

Rebecca Dwan brought multi-colored lights for a festive addition to the white lights inside the hall. This party is always a wonderful reunion of dancers from near and far and of folks who have danced with us over the decades.

I read “Twas the Night Before Christmas” as is our tradition, followed by Ruthie Bitton singing a medley of Hanukah songs accompanied by Ellen Watson on viola. The rest of the evening we were treated to live music beginning with a choral set by Gradina including Dramskoto, Bavno, Jovano Jovanke, Trgnala Rumjana, Staro Pomaško,

among others. They were followed by the group Yabulka, local musicians playing Bulgarian tunes. They began their set with Gradina singing along to the beautiful tune Devojko Mari Hubava as we slowly danced around them.

The evening concluded with Yabulka and Gradina together for two lesnotos: Makedonsko Devojče and Liljano Mome. The hall lights were dimmed; you could hear a pin drop in the hall. It was incredibly moving and magical. We wanted it to never end.



The combined talents of Gradina and Yabulka entertained at the Razzmatazz Christmas dance party. *Photo by Kevin Dwan.*

On February 6, our spring folk dance classes will resume. **Our annual Red & Black Ball will be on Saturday, March 30.** A special intermediate dance workshop with **Jaap Leegwater and Filip Filipov** will take place on Tuesday, April 16.

SAN FRANCISCO GROUPS - by *Erika Opper*

In late June 2021, to combat the isolation of COVID, a group of Changs members began dancing **on top of the Merced Manor Reservoir for an hour one afternoon each week** with views towards the ocean, Stern Grove, and Mount Davidson. We enjoyed ourselves so much that we have continued, even though Changs now meets at the Miraloma Park Clubhouse every Friday evening. Over the course of our sessions, we've had the participation of 44 Changs members and 41 others, some coming just once and some becoming part of our core group of regulars. We've often had remarkable weather and gorgeous skies, sometimes

... AND BEYOND

moved to lower ground due to wind, danced through light rain a couple of times, and re-scheduled to alternate days or canceled just a few times due to heavy rain. For many of us, this is the best hour of the week!



The view from Merced Manor Reservoir. *Photo by Erika Opper.*

Changs has continued having lots of enthusiastic fun for all with **very successful Family Nights on the fourth Friday of each month**, followed by request dancing until 10. Holiday themes have allowed us to dance traditional dances to unusual music and to engage in plenty of silliness. Who knew Pata Pata could be danced to “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer”? We were so pleased to have our new kids attending for the fourth time, as well as two alumni of our original family group, now college students, who were home for the holidays. In addition, two of our City College teachers came to dance with us. It truly was a special night for the Changs family! **February’s Family Night will be February 23.**

On the third night of Hannukah in 2023, Cafe Shalom’s Udy Gold teamed up with Congregation Am Tikvah for a celebration. The evening began with candle lighting, singing of traditional songs, and a potluck dinner. Then Udy led a number of fun dances for the children and kids-at-heart, followed by easy dances in which many synagogue members participated.

The evening continued with Cafe Shalom’s usual mix of circle, line, and couple dances along with the traditional celebration of the month’s birthdays. Cafe Shalom meets at Am Tikvah for class at 7:30 Tuesday evenings and for a party at 7:30 on the second Saturday of each month.

PENINSULA FOLK DANCE COUNCIL

by Clem Dickey

The Palomanians welcomed 68 people at their annual Pie Party. Denise Heenan emceed. Berry pies abounded, and pumpkin, apple, custard, and chocolate were also represented.

Attendance at the Peninsula Folk Dance Council’s Christmas Day party was 65. Emcee Adony Beniares added a few simpler dances for family members and newer dancers.

The Saratoga Folk Dancers celebrated December with a Black & White Ball, including, we thought, a customary vote for “best costume.” Monty Low wore a black Mandarin coat, which we later learned was a gift from fellow dancer Nilesh Shah. Melissa Miller draped herself with a floor-length gold-trimmed shawl, and several white beaded necklaces. Alan Rothchild wore a souvenir t-shirt from the Maccabean Revolt, 165 BC. Lesley Bone, who also brought the decorations, wore one black shoe and one white shoe.

The votes were trickling in when Tom Williard and Lisa Bell arrived. **Fashionably late and dominatrix-themed, he wore a daringly low cut top and a demi-petticoat and she carried the**

obligatory whip

(below). Voting halted, and Tom and Lisa won by some combination of edict and acclamation. Congratulations and well deserved.

The Moveable Feet Club’s New Year’s Eve party (review on p. 7) raised over \$12,000 for Second Harvest Food Bank. Bravo!

Please note that the Arrillaga Recreation Center now



closes at 9 pm, so all classes are starting and ending earlier than in previous quarters.

The Peninsula Council’s monthly party **shifts to Sunday afternoon this month** so dancers can also attend Berkeley Folk Dancers and Folk Dance Federation co-sponsored **Festival of the Oaks** with John Morovich on **Saturday, February 10**. The PFDC party is a **Valentine’s Dance Party** at St. Bede’s Church Hall, Menlo Park.

continued on p. 18

NEWS FROM AROUND THE BAY... *continued*

BERKELEY FOLK DANCERS

by Ann Moghaddas

Welcome to 2024! We enjoyed the transition to a New Year at a New Year's Eve Dance Party on December 31. Earlier in December we enjoyed the Advanced Class Fun Night when we had fun dancing Oklahoma Mixer to Jingle Bell Rock, and Allemannsmarj to Minka's Sleigh Ride (an arrangement of two Ukrainian folk tunes).

We celebrated BFD's 83rd birthday on Saturday, January 6. We welcomed all the new BFD members as we also celebrated our longevity.

The January 26-28 weekend found us at BFD's annual Monte Toyon Retreat with teaching by Adony Beniars.

Please don't forget our big event of the year, the Festival of the Oaks, co-sponsored by BFD and the Folk Dance Federation. This year the workshop with John Morovich is in the afternoon 1:30-4 pm, ending with a short dance performance. There is an optional early on-site dinner (4:15-5:15), followed by a dance party until 9 pm. Costs and other details can be found on the flyer on p. 22. **We hope to see you there!**

At Berkeley Folk Dancers Birthday Ball in January, David Hillis announced to the cheers of the assembled members that the club **membership has fully recovered from the COVID pandemic.** Membership in February of 2020 was 134 members. As of January 2024, membership now stands at 141! Congratulations!



Marija and David Hillis, above left, and BFD President Gillian Belcher and Bruce Carter, above right, danced at BFD's Birthday Ball. *Photos by L. Tucker.*

Palomanians Forever!

by Denise Heenan

It has been my privilege to be a part of Palomanians for over 30 years. My involvement began when I was invited to fill the teaching position of Lillian Cohen, who was retiring.

Ruth Ruling was my indomitable mentor, firm but kind, thorough, encouraging, and an excellent guide to the



challenging task of teaching International Folk Dance. Being new to the Palomanians I was gently given these guidelines: (1) We don't do round dances (couple dances choreographed for the square dance community); and (2) No recreational or fad dances. That was a change from my experience with Santa Clara Valley Folk Dancers, originally known as the Gay Nighters.

As a group of mostly couples, the Palomanians were very accomplished dancers. It was common to dance several Scottish Country dances a night without needing a walk or talk-through. Gradually they began to welcome more non-partner kolos and new dances. If the group did not like a dance, I was very politely advised of that fact. To describe this group as warm, welcoming, accepting, kind, and encouraging only begins to say how special they were and still are.

Our dance repertoire has evolved since those days, welcoming a greater variety of dances, and many new dancers. We have kept folk dance alive despite losing our wonderful dance studio following renovation of the Menlo Park Recreation Center. We're beginning to outgrow our very rectangular space in the Juniper Room. We think this is good news. In order to accommodate our growing group a new, larger space is being considered and will be announced.

Now is the time to pass the torch to new teachers and class organizers. My gratitude to all I have met, danced with, celebrated with, and more, is impossible to adequately express. I appreciate all the kind notes and expressions of thanks I have received over the past few months. I feel very fortunate to be a part of such a loving group of people – my other family!

In December, Denise officially retired as leader of the Palomanians, although she'll continue to dance with them and emcee parties when asked. She offered this perspective on her years leading the group.

Holiday Concert by Kopachka Members

by Susie Shoaf

On the Friday before Christmas, Kopachka Folk Dancers were treated to a mini concert at Almonte Hall in Mill Valley during a request dancing night. Three members who are not only dancers but musicians volunteered to share their other passion and serenade us with a few tunes for listening and dancing!

First, Jenny Solheim and Jill Myers played several Swedish tunes as a duet: Vals från Boda, Lanna Villes Schottis, and Värvindar friska. Jenny played her great-great-grandfather's fiddle and Jill played the Nyckelharpa, a traditional Swedish keyed fiddle related to the hurdy-gurdy. Jenny started playing fiddle when she was six years old, learning by ear while her parents danced. Jill started in the late 1990s, learning from visiting musicians and in workshops in Sweden. Both showed proficiency and talent as they concentrated on their performances. Jenny continued solo, changing fiddles, using a beautiful inlaid one, a hardingfele (Hardanger fiddle), and tackled complicated Norwegian dance tunes Per Saltevu and Fanten. A few dancers happily joined in on the dance floor.

Richard Paoli came on last with his accordion, a Petosa model 1100 ESM, made in Italy and finished in Seattle. He played a beautiful Amazing Grace, a few holiday songs, then a waltz to end the concert. Richard shared a fun fact: he started with violin and played at the Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island in 1940 with some 5,000 music students.

It's always fun to see another facet of our dancing members. So many talented musicians are out there but rarely do we get to have a mini-concert at our regular Friday dancing. Thank you to each of them on behalf of our club. It was indeed a holiday treat!



Jill Myers (above) and Jenny Solheim (below) played for Kopachka.



Photos above by S. Shoaf.



Richard Paoli (left) played in the 1940 Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island. He's front row center in the photo on the right.

Folk Dancing Brought Them Together *(continued)*

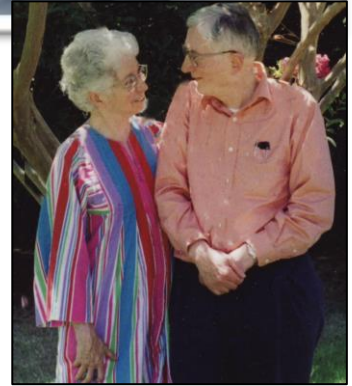
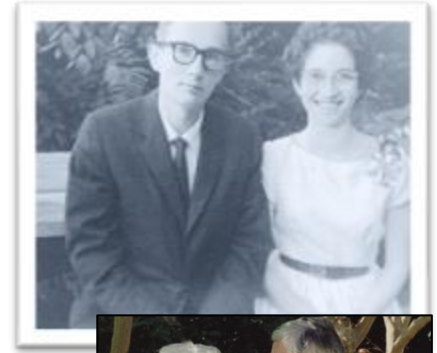
Ralph and Bonnie Gagnon (by Ralph)

On September 30, 2019, friends gathered for a celebration of life for my wife Bonnie, who died on July 28 of that year. It was the 60th anniversary of the day we met. Bonnie became an accomplished folk dancer, and specifically took Scandinavian classes with Gordon Tracy in Seattle and Donna Tripp and Ted Martin in Anaheim. I, myself, have not done those things.

But on September 30, 1959, all that was in the future. I had had a modest amount of folk dance experience and had learned how to do the Hambo. On that night, I went folk dancing at a gym on the Cal Berkeley campus. Bonnie had never folk danced, but someone in her house invited her to go folk dancing, so she went as a lark. That night, they had an intermission with announcements and everyone sat down to listen. Then they announced that the next dance would be a Hambo. I turned to the pretty 17-year-old girl sitting next to me and asked her if she knew the Hambo. She said, "Yes," so off we went.

Did I mention that Bonnie had never folk danced before? As you can imagine, the Hambo with her was a complete disaster. When I asked her about it, she explained, "Oh, I thought they had said the Mambo!" That night, when I walked her home to Stebbins Hall, I said, "See you around some time." And she said, "When?"

And the rest is history. Not long after that, I was teaching Bonnie the Hambo in a parking lot.



Marilyn Smith and Eric Torgerson (by Marilyn)

Over the years teaching folk dance, I was always so happy to see people suddenly discover someone special in our class. As the weeks went by, I could see that special spark and watch a friendship blossom. Many of these couples went on to marry. One year several of these couples presented me with a framed picture of each of them together under the heading "Marilyn's Matches."



In 1994, at a Cajun dance at Ashkenaz in Berkeley, I met that person who provided the spark and the friendship that led to our marriage: Eric Torgerson. I had gone to the dance with my friend Stefanie. I danced with several people that night, but when I danced with Eric we just fit together. It felt as if we had been dancing together forever. My friend Stefanie says she can still picture his hand reaching out to me as he asked me to dance.

Fast forward to another Cajun dance at Ashkenaz, this time in 2004. As it got later in the evening, Eric asked if I wanted to do one last dance. As we danced under the red light over the dance floor, Eric pulled out a small silver box with a miniature bow on it. Inside was an engagement ring. Another dancer came up to us at the end of the dance and said, "I saw the whole thing. It was really beautiful!"

Eric and I married in 2005 in a wonderful little hall in Penngrrove, Sonoma County, surrounded by family and folk dance friends. We still Cajun dance at Ashkenaz.

Mark and Peggy Kaminsky (by Mark)

Peggy and I met in front of Memorial Church at a Stanford Folk Dancers party in September 1972. We hit it off right away. We had a half-hour to talk while Joyce Uggla taught Danish Family Circle, which we both mastered easily. We were married in 1974, and continued to dance at Stanford until I got my PhD in 1976 and we moved to San Antonio, where we found a congenial group and danced with them for most of our two years there.

My next job was in New Jersey, and we did not dance there at all. We returned to California in 1980 and found Ned and Marian Gault's class at West Valley College, so we danced there until 1986, when we moved to Sunnyvale.

At that point, Ned and Marian invited us to join their performing group, Ensemble International. We danced with them until 2000. During that time, we also danced occasionally with Loui Tucker's class in Saratoga. Since 2000, we have rarely danced, for various reasons.

We hope to celebrate our fiftieth anniversary this coming August. I keep thinking of attempting to go dancing again, but it does not seem likely due to medical conditions.

Melissa Miller and Lew Smith (by Melissa)

We didn't actually meet from/while dancing, but we connected *because of* dancing. How so?

I met Lew because I was the Physics Department secretary at San Jose State University and he was one of the graduate students. He had just finished his BS in Physics at UC Santa Barbara and was starting on the MS Physics program. He was very shy back then, and would pop into the department office, check his mailbox, and disappear immediately. (I was, at that time, involved with a fellow who did NOT dance, and hated having to justify going out to dance without him.)

I had a student assistant in the Department Office who mentioned that "that grad student, Smith" was in her modern dance class. "Hmm," I thought. "A man who's interested in dance and is secure enough to wear tights!"

Around Christmas time, my student assistant told me she'd seen "that grad student, Smith" at the ballet in San Francisco ("Ooh, he goes to the ballet!"), and he was sitting in a box seat! ("Hmm – even better!")

Then Prof. Helen Doerr, who taught the folk dance classes through the PE Department, called the Physics Department office. I knew who she was because I'd been to a few of her folk dance club meetings. Mrs. Doerr needed to get in touch with Lew Smith. "Oh really," I wondered aloud, "How come?" She said she was sick and needed Lew to cover her class for her! Of course, I gave her his number, and decided I really had to get to know "that grad student, Smith" who was a good enough dancer that he could take over the class on short notice.

By now I was looking for opportunities to chat with this slim, fair, quiet young man. Our first date was to go see the Duquesne University Tamburitzans.

We've danced together ever since, recently celebrating our 49th wedding anniversary. Dance is a unifying force in our relationship and has been an organizing factor for our recreation and travel for over 50 years.

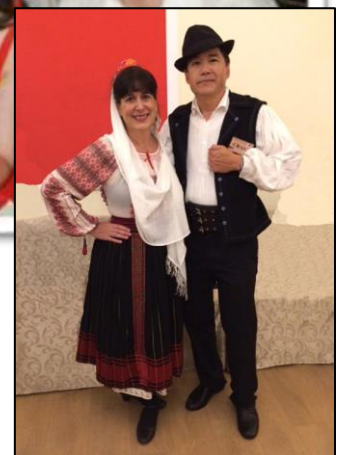
Linnea Mandell and Craig Kurumada (by Linnea and Craig)

In 1992, Živio Ethnic Arts Ensemble invited Linnea Mandell to go to Salt Lake City to lead dances at a local Slavic festival. We had our first conversation after the festival when a group of folk dancers went out for Greek food. As both of us had been previously married to vegetarians, we both made the same mental note, "Hey, here's a nice person who also eats meat!"

We did not see each other for six months until we met again at Mendocino Balkan Camp. Linnea, her father, and friends always shared Cabin 8. For some reason she cannot recall, Linnea also brought a tent to Camp that year and set it up a short distance from the cabin. We reconnected and got to know each other during camp, playing music and dancing. Feeling like a teenager, Linnea would wait until her father went to sleep, and would then sneak out of the cabin and meet Craig in the tent.

After a year of flights between California and Utah, we decided that Craig would move into Linnea's house in Arcata. Craig's Živio friends held a yard sale and helped pack a U-Haul which Craig drove over the mountains listening to his favorite Ziyiá cassette over and over to keep himself awake. We unloaded everything into Linnea's living room in the evening and left for a trip to Bulgaria the next morning.

In July of 2024, we will celebrate 32 years together.



continued on p. 24

75th Annual International Folk Dance Festival of the Oaks



John Morovich

Registration begins at 1:00 p.m.

Institute with John Morovich
1:30 – 4:00
\$20.00

Dance Performance
4:00 – 4:15

International Folk Dancing
*Dances from around the world,
Institute Reviews & contras*
5:15 – 9:00 p.m. – \$18.00

All day – Institutes & Folk Dance Party
\$34.00

Optional Dinner
4:15 – 5:15 p.m.
\$10.00

Federation Membership meeting 4:15 – 5:15 p.m.
*Folk Dance Federation of California will
provide dinner for members attending.*

DATE AND LOCATION

Saturday, February 10, 2024
1:00 – 9:00 p.m. – Note new time!
Location: Live Oak Park
1301 Shattuck Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94709



No partner needed

Sponsored by
Berkeley Folk Dancers &
Folk Dance Federation of California, Inc.

ARMENIA tour (May 15-June 1st) & BALI tour (June 17-July 1st) with Tineke & Maurits van Geel



ARMENIA DANCE & CULTURE TOUR € 1890 (land only) a 14-day trip in which you will visit the highlights of the country, but also see its hidden gems. Enjoy dance classes with local teachers.

BALI DANCE VACATION € 1980 (land only) a 15-day dance vacation to Bali means a tropical cocktail of beach, nature, handicrafts, Hindu culture, beautiful weather and hospitable inhabitants. International folk dancing with Tineke and Maurits.

Both tours are also suitable for non-dancers. Details: www.tinekevangeel.nl

LYRIDS FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL (APRIL 19-21, 2024)

by Burnaby International Folk Dancers

You are invited to the **10TH LYRIDS FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL**. This year promises to be another remarkable celebration of global dance traditions and community spirit. Featured teachers are Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion (Romanian) and Tom Bozgian and Sheree King (Armenian).

The festival takes place at Pitt Meadows, British Columbia, 30 km east of Vancouver Airport. The Pitt Meadows Heritage Hall boasts a wonderful hardwood dance floor, free parking, and a convenient Best Western Plus Inn & Suites nearby (a block of rooms has been reserved).

In addition to frequent and plentiful snacks, meals are catered and will provide for a variety of dietary requirements.

Some highlights:

- The Friday evening party features a lively dance session to recorded music.
- Saturday evening showcases an extraordinary performance and dance session with Jana Rickel's band Zakuska, from Seattle, Washington.
- Sing-along sessions and cultural talks with our instructors.
- Shopping! There will be a selection of ethnic clothing and other treasures. (You're welcome to bring your own costumes or ethnic items to sell or consign.)

Registration is open! If you're interested in volunteering, let us know on the registration form. For additional details and a glimpse of our past festivals, visit our website at LyridsFolkDanceFestival.org, or write to lyridsfolkdancefestival@gmail.com.



Beverly Barr (1933–2023)



Beverly Barr with Irwin, at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 2009. They attended 15 years, beginning in 1987.

Beverly Barr left our folk dance community in December 2023. Besides her family, her passion was international folk dancing. She and her husband, Irwin Barr (who died in 2020), taught international folk dancing in southern California for over 50 years and were well-known in the folk dance community.

Beverly danced as a child and performed in amateur and semi-professional productions throughout early adulthood. Beverly met Irwin, her lifetime dance partner, in high school and they married following graduation.

About five years after she started folk dancing, she began teaching, with Irwin assisting. She and Irwin taught two daytime and three evening classes each week and were guest teachers at many other groups. Beverly also planned popular group trips and cruises.

In addition to her weekly dance classes, Beverly was a past-president of the Folk Dance Federation South (1989-92) and an organizer of workshops and camps. In particular, the Barrs provided leadership for the Hess-Kramer weekend camp for 33 years!

Folk Dancing Brought Them Together *(continued)*

Yvonne and Andre Couvillion (by Yvonne)

Andre and I met at a contra at Lost Pines Dance Hall outside of Bastrop, Texas. It was the spring of 1989. Andre asked me to dance and asked me my name, then he sang a little from Jambalaya: “My Yvonne, the sweetest one.”

We became dance buddies. We were both new to Austin International Folk Dancers and eager to learn more dances than they taught each Saturday, so we just jumped in and followed along. We were stumped by the Hambo until they finally taught it. At that time, besides contra and international, we also danced at country dance halls, so we practiced Hambo to some of the country waltzes. Soon we added Scandinavian and Scottish Country Dancing to our weekly schedule.

Eventually I noticed we had more than dancing in common: he laughed as often, albeit not as loudly, as I did; we both liked to garden; and we were both vegetarians. We were married in 1991.



Howard Young and Bonnie LeMat (by Howard)

After my divorce in 2003, I was feeling the need to get back in circulation. I revealed this lamentation to a long-time friend, Arlene Imagawa. Her comment (22 years ago) was, “You should go to Loui Tucker’s Thursday night class.” I’m certainly glad I did.



After attending a few times, I noticed a woman who was both attractive and a good dancer. I asked the fellow sitting next to me, Cliff Jenkins, “Who’s that woman dancing third in the line?” Cliff (in a very loud voice that embarrassed me) said, “That’s Bonnie!” Armed with that information, I began attending the after-class restaurant social, where I’d strategically manipulate the seating arrangement so that I’d be next to Bonnie. I felt like I was in high school again.

In early 2005, we discovered that we had both signed up for the Arcata Festival, and we decided to carpool there together. During that festival, we fell in love. On the last night of the festival, Bonnie stepped off a chair she was standing on while videotaping and severely sprained her ankle, leaving her unable to walk. What an opportunity! Roy Butler and I carried her out of the hall, and I got to carry her from the festival, into my car, and the periodic stops along the eight-hour trip home. Nothing better than being Johnny-on-the-spot when a damsel is in distress.

I can’t imagine life without Bonnie.

Ken and Nancy Kaye (by Ken)

Folk dancing was at the International Center at UCLA. I arrived on a very warm Friday evening when the teaching of a dance was about to end. I wore jeans, with my shirt sleeves rolled up. When the teaching of the dance was over, Nancy spotted me across the floor (think of *South Pacific* and “Some Enchanted Evening”) and walked over to me. She said, “Why aren’t you dancing?” I replied that I had just gotten there. We introduced each other and were told there was going to be the teaching of another dance. I cannot tell you what that dance was, but it was Polish, and we agreed to learn it together. There was one step where the man was to pick up the girl, but Nancy said not to do that. I obliged. We then danced the rest of the evening together.

As an almost penniless graduate student at the late hour, I told Nancy that I needed to catch a bus back to my Santa Monica apartment. She offered to give me a lift. On the way we stopped at a McDonald’s (I was a big spender then) where Nancy had her first chocolate milk shake.

Nancy later told me that she liked how I looked, especially with my shirt sleeves rolled up. The jeans helped. We discovered we also had a great love of classical music, and that I was from Brooklyn, as were her parents.



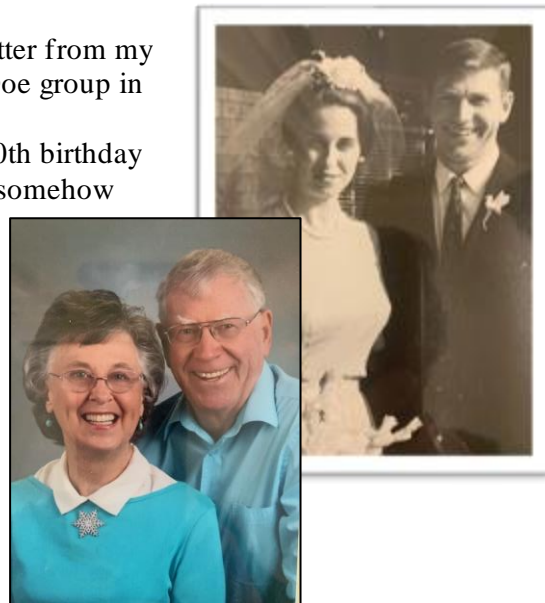
Judy and John Kropp (by Judy)

When I took time off during college to work and travel, I received a letter from my mother saying she and Dad had started folk dancing with the Docey Doe group in Redwood City. I thought that sounded so “square.”

When I returned to college, Dad asked me to celebrate Mom’s 50th birthday at an Oktoberfest at the San Francisco Armory. I went reluctantly but somehow enjoyed the oom-pah music and dancing with the young men. Several of the men were from Europe but couldn’t dance very well.

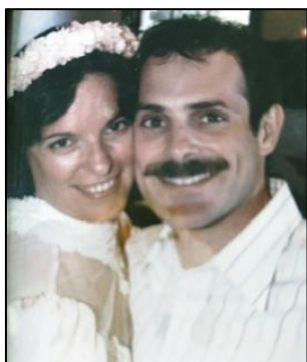
One man was from Oakland and was an excellent dancer. When he heard I was living in Berkeley, he invited me to meet him at Ruth Browns’ Israeli dance class at Hillel. I rode my trusty bike there and was instantly wowed by the music and dance and agreed to return the following week.

That young man was Don Kropp, and he and I were married a year later. After almost 60 years, we are still dancing. Don is 90 and I am 83, so we prefer the slower dances now. He enjoys telling people he met me in a beer hall!



Marion and Matt Snyderman (by Marion)

My husband Matt and I met at an evening of jitterbug/swing dancing at the Avenue Ballroom in San Francisco, where Neal Sandler had the Mandala Folkdance Center, out at 19th Avenue and Taraval. We noticed each other across the room during the dance lesson, and I was on my way to asking him to dance for the lady’s choice when someone else got there first. But she didn’t have a chance with him after he later asked me to dance and we did that first magical Texas Tommy. We spent a wonderful evening talking, laughing, and dancing, and it only took a few more dates for us to realize we were well matched on and off the dance floor. Matt did try folk dancing and can still do a Lesnoto and even Hambo, but never got to love it. (I tried to understand football at least a little...)



Anyway, this August 18, 2024, we’ll be celebrating the night we met 40 years ago. We still do swing dance and Cajun. And we still have the yellow sticky notes with our exchanged phone numbers from that night, when our first conversation was, “Want to dance?” “Okay.”

Wen-Li and Sue Chiang (by Wen-Li)

Sue and I met at a folk dance club in 2001, where she had just discovered the world of folk dancing. She found a newspaper advertisement and had come to our club without prior dancing experience. She learned dances at a fast pace.

During the next couple of years of dancing and performing together, we gradually became closer. In 2006, she started a folk dance class in the city of Cerritos, and I drove a half-hour every week to support her. In 2009, we founded the Cerritos Folk Dancers.

On June 8, 2014, we got married at the Cerritos Folk Dancers fifth-anniversary festival. Loui Tucker was the officiant and Erica Goldman was one of the bridesmaids. About 100 folk dancing friends joined the wedding party and some groups performed special dances in celebration.

Our 10-year anniversary is coming soon. We started late, but we will keep on dancing through life together.



There are many other couples who met at a dance event who are not mentioned here. Among them:

Yale and Marcia Rosenblatt
Roy and Patty Butler
Lucy and Richard Chang
Larry and Ruth Miller
Al and Teddy Wolterbeek

Pete and Janell Galanis
Laila and Sidney Messer
Bill and Louise Lidicker
Elsa and Frank Bacher
Bruce and Mary Wyckoff

Hiram and Arden Pierce
Kamrin MacKnight and Gordon Deeg
Andy Partos and Cornelia Gharfur
Cliff Jenkins and Betsy Moore
Jerry and Kathy Helt

Statewide 2024 Comes to the East Bay

By the Smile Folk Dancers

Statewide 2024 will come to the Bay Area again in 2024. Although the Bay Area has hosted the Statewide a few times in the past (San Jose in 2006 and 2012, Berkeley in 2016, San Mateo in 1994, and Palo Alto in 1988), this is the East Bay year. The Smile Folk Dancers of Fremont are happy to welcome folk dance lovers and their families to experience the hospitality and unique experience from this area.

We will be dancing in Newark Pavilion in Newark, California. The Pavilion has been around for more than a century, mainly used by Portuguese whalers and sailors who became dairymen and farmers in the early 1900s. The Pavilion became the home of annual St. John's Day (June 24th) celebration, where ranchers and field hands ate, drank wine, and talked about crops and cattle. The Pavilion's main hall is spacious, with benches around the hall for seating. The hall has a bar which will enhance our fun during evening party hours.

For our out-of-town friends, **we have arranged for the Chase Suite Hotel in Newark** to host dancers and their families. Chase is a full-suite, residential-style hotel. The Federation has negotiated two types of rooms with special pricing: (1) the two-bedroom, two-bath *King* suite and (2) the two-bedroom, two-bath *Regular* suite. All rooms have full kitchens, including a full-size oven. (There is a video tour of these rooms on the hotel's website.)

The original low-priced rooms were quickly sold out, but after further negotiations with the hotel, they agreed to open a few more rooms **at a special rate until early March**. The King two-bedroom suite is \$249 per night and the two-bedroom Regular suite is \$159 per night. **Four dancers can easily share a suite, making the cost as low as \$40 per night!** Please use "folkfed2024" as the code to get these prices.

There are more than 50 restaurants within a one-mile radius of the Pavilion that offer different food choices. The Statewide Committee has chosen four meals from the best of our local restaurants: Mexican, Chinese (Cantonese-style dim sum), Greek, and gourmet hamburgers. You may, of course, wish to choose to eat at any of the other local restaurants.

If you come earlier or want to stay a few days after Statewide, or if you have non-dancing family members joining you, the East Bay offers many sightseeing opportunities:

- **Hike** in (1) Coyote Hill and Don Edwards S.F. Bay Wildlife Refuge to watch wildlife and colorful sunsets, and (2) Mission Peak to see beautiful spring wildflowers and an overview of the San Francisco Bay.
- **Visit** the Morton Salt Plant in Newark to learn how table salt is made from sea water – a five year process!
- **Tour** the town of Niles. Charlie Chaplin and Broncho Billy made more than 350 movies at a studio in Niles in the early 1900s. Niles was Hollywood before Hollywood. The theater/museum shows classic Chaplin movies on Saturday nights, with live piano accompaniment.
- **Ride** the Niles Canyon Railway in Niles. It's the historic terminus of the 1860 transcontinental rail system. The trip on a 140-year old locomotive follows the 9-mile railroad tracks to the nearby town of Sunol.

We, the members of Smile Folk Dancers, are honored to present the best that the East Bay can offer. Come to Fremont, California, voted the Happiest City in the US three years in a row (wallethub.com).



View of the Pavilion's spacious dance hall.

FROM THE *LET'S DANCE!* PHOTO ARCHIVES

Last Month's Photo



Above is another couple who met at a dance event. She was a dance teacher, and he was one of her students! Can you identify the couple?

The **THIRD** person who submits the correct name of this dance wins a \$25 gift card. Send your answers to editor@folkdance.com or loui@loutucker.com.

journey. (Actually, he shared several detailed pages, but that's going to be saved for the next issue.) Below are the highlights.

Eliot's mother, Gertrude, was his first dance teacher. She started folk dancing in the 1930s and spent decades as a P.E. teacher, teaching ball skills, balance, running and jumping in rhythm, and *dancing*. She gave classes at her home dance studio for her kids' friends, including Eliot, who loved Jiffy Mixer and Tennessee Wig Walk!

By the late sixties, Eliot decided he wanted to be a folk dance teacher. He eventually taught at the Folk Dance Club at UC, in the Hearst Memorial Gymnasium, where dancing took place three nights a week in the early seventies. He also taught at a Greek taverna, Aitos. His friend David Nadel started Ashkenaz café and dance venue, so he started teaching there too.

Mihai David and Yves Moreau were his most important dance instructors in the early 1970s. He loved Romanian and Bulgarian dances. He started attending Stockton Folk Dance Camp where he discovered Scandinavian and also fell in love with square dancing called by Jerry Helt.

In the last 1980s, Eliot spent several summers learning Cajun and Zydeco dancing in Louisiana from the locals, and brought those dances back to teach in the Bay Area.

David Nadel's death in 1996 affected Eliot so profoundly he dropped out of dancing for 18 years, returning only at the suggestion of his mother's best friend at Gertrude's funeral.

Except for during COVID, he has been attending Israeli dance classes two or three times a week.

Watch for the full story, full of anecdotes and subplots, in the March issue of *Let's Dance!*



That's Edith (Edie) Cuthbert, above, and her VW Bug packed full of boxes of records and piles of costumes arriving at Stockton Folk Dance Camp on the University of the Pacific campus in the 1970s. She lived in Oakland and often made three trips to Camp so she could share her collection. On the right is another photo of Edie taken in the 1990s.

WE HAVE A WINNER!

Eliot Khuner was the winner of the \$25 gift card for correctly identifying Edith Cuthbert in last month's issue. He shared the following information about himself and his dance








WHY I STARTED FOLK DANCING

Reprinted with permission from the *Discovering Dance* column in the February 2023 issue of *The Northwest Folk Dancer* by Harry Khamis

(modified slightly to fit this format.)

International folk dance has been a huge part of my life for 45 years. But how I got into it was entirely by accident and, as I look back on it, quite, well, bizarre!

In 1978, I was a “starving graduate student” at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. On Friday evenings, a couple of my buddies and I were in the habit of roaming around Blacksburg, and we would often end up at Squires Student Center on campus to play some ping-pong or shoot some pool. One of our friends, Phil, never joined us because he taught folk dancing upstairs at Squires on Friday nights.

 <p>We would always go up and say “Hi” to him and watch people engage in this ridiculous, meaningless dance activity for a few minutes and then leave. Of course, we never deigned to participate in such nonsense ourselves.</p> <p>➡</p>	 <p>By and by, a new graduate student, Vonda, arrived at the Virginia Tech Statistics Department, where I studied. Eventually, I asked her for a Friday night date...</p> <p>➡</p>	<p>After our pizza dinner, we arrived at Squires. I just wanted to get this part of the evening over with as quickly as possible. Well, my friend Phil taught the Israeli dance At V’Ani that evening. I struggled through the teaching, wanting to be just about anywhere else. Then, another miracle occurred! The music was played, and my body started to move in time to the music. In that instant, when I felt the movement in my body following and flowing to the music, I was hooked. From that moment, Friday nights at the folk dance group at Squires Student Center became my passion.</p>
 <p>...whereupon I found myself in a pickle. Even a pizza dinner and movie for two would have stretched my budget. So, I was looking for ways of, well, economizing.</p> <p>➡</p>	 <p>Then a miracle occurred! I remembered the Friday night folk dancing at Squires Student Center was free! Surely I could tolerate one night of folk dancing if it meant saving a few bucks. Problem solved!</p> <p>➡</p>	 <p>You might wonder what happened to Vonda. Embarrassingly, I must report that she never returned to folk dancing. In fact, she married my best friend, and they had two kids together.</p> <p>I often wonder if I would ever have found folk dancing if I were not such a cheapskate. I guess I will never know for sure. But I do know that, for that one instant in my life, I will be forever grateful that I was a cheapskate!</p>

Levi Jackson Rose

(United States)

Levi Jackson Rose is a circle mixer created by Bernard Chalk for dancers from Berea College in Kentucky to display in London in 1985 while representing the United States at the United Nations Year of Youth. Chalk was a caller from England who specialized in American contras and squares and called frequently in the United States. He was asked by Dr. John Ramsey, the director of the Berea College Recreation Extension, to write a dance inspired by the dance Levi Jackson Rag by Pat Shaw (1974), also a 5-couple mixer, but in a different shape. Both dances were named for the clubhouse used as a dance hall at Levi Jackson State Park in Kentucky and designed to be done around the columns that ran down the middle of the hall (since demolished).

Levi Jackson Rose is usually done to the tune “October Rose,” written by Ruth McLain (1980).

Lothar Narins presented this dance at the Federation’s Officers Ball in October 2023. He and his mother, Ulrike, learned it during a lengthy stay in Japan in 2016, at one of the monthly all-day workshops.

Music/Meter: “October Rose” was recorded on the McLain Family Band Country Dance Album CLR-16. (See mclainfamilyband.com/discography and the linked store to purchase online.)

If danced to “October Rose” (6/8 meter), two steps per measure. It can also be danced to any 32-bar jig (6/8 meter), reel (2/4 meter) or 16-bar march (4/4 meter).

Video: Videos on YouTube; search for “Levi Jackson Rose dance.”

Formation: Five couples in a circle, although groups of four and six couples also work. (See notes on mixing below.) Face center, M on L, W on R. Corners are the dancers on their other side.

Steps & Styling: Walk. A basic walking step used in square and contra dancing. Begin with R foot. If music is in 6/8 or 2/4, two steps per measure; for a march, four steps per measure.

Allemande L. Rotating with another dancer, usually with Corner, L hands joined in W-pos, usually one complete turn. Can be done with R hands joined, usually with partner.

Buzz Step. Moving left (CW), step R in front of L (ct 1); step L to L (ct &). Step repeats exactly. Often done while in ballroom position, rotating as a couple, but also used, as in this dance, in a circle of couples.

L-Hand Star. Dancers face R in a small circle, extending and joining L hands, arms straight from the shoulder.

Balance. Step R to R (ct 1); step L next to R (ct &); step R in place (ct 2). Can be done with opposite footwork and direction.

When danced, the timing of the walking moves can be somewhat fluid.

Meas	6/8 meter (but see notes above re meter)	PATTERN
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INTRODUCTION. Length will depend on the music used.

I. FIGURE 8 USING ALLEMANDE L, ALLEMANDE R.

1-3 Allemande L Corner: M face W on L; W face M on R. Joining L hands, arm bent at the elbow, beg R, walk 6 steps fwd, rotating one full turn CCW. End facing ptr and release L handhold.

Levi Jackson Rose – *continued*

- 4-6 Allemande R Partner: Extend and join R hands with ptr. Walk 6 steps fwd, rotating CW one full turn plus a quarter, to end M in ctr facing CCW, W on outside facing CW. Ptrs maintain R handhold. M use L hand to form a L-Hand Star.
- 7-8 Balance R, twd partner; Balance L, away from partner.
- II. WALK FWD HALF WAY; SWING PARTNER. (see note below)
- 1-4 M maintain the L-Hand Star; drop R handhold. Beg R, walk eight steps fwd, M walking CCW, W walking CW, meeting ptr again.
- If dancing a four-couple set, walk past partner to the next dancer to make it a mixer.
If dancing a six-couple set, stop at the fifth dancer.
- 5-8 Take ballroom pos and rotate (swing) using six Buzz Steps. On meas 4, M step twd ctr, raise arms high to each side, and join hands with M on each side, forming arches. M release W to her R, and W spins with two steps in place, ending behind M. Note: W may choose not to spin, but stand behind M.
- III. WOMEN WEAVE THE ARCHES; BASKET HOLD; BUZZ STEP IN A CIRCLE.
- 1-6 W weave CW around the circle formed by the M, moving with 12 steps through the arches: in under their ptr's L side, in front of the second man, out the next arch, behind the third man, and in front of the fourth man.
- 7-8 W join hands in V-pos. With four steps, W back under the arch between the fourth and fifth M. M lower their joined hands in front of the W to form the "rose" or basket.
- 9-16 Using 16 Buzz Steps, rotate the circle of cpls CW (no specified distance). Release all handholds on meas 16, to prepare to repeat from the beginning. Note: If W are delayed while weaving the arches, the number of Buzz Steps in a circle may be reduced.

Sequence: Repeat dance as noted until the music ends.



In Levi Jackson Rose, women weave under the arches formed by the men.

BLAST FROM THE PAST – 41 years ago!

The clip below appeared in the March 1983 issue of *Let's Dance!* and announces the wedding of two folk dance teachers in the North Bay – Elsa Isaac and Frank Bacher. It was truly a folk dancers' wedding! Frank and Elsa met at Stockton Folk Dance Camp. Elsa attended for 34 years (1978-2015) and Frank attended for 40 years (1964-2004). The photos below were taken at Stockton Camp in the late 1980s. Elsa once confided, "Stockton was a wonderful place to fall in love!"

COUNCIL CLIPS

REDWOOD FOLK DANCE COUNCIL

1983 has begun with much happy folk dancing in our area; parties and classes are well attended and fun. The twelfth Annual Sweetheart Festival was the usual delightful affair at the auditorium in Napa. June Schaal and her loyal dance groups always put much time, effort and talents into making this a colorful and joyful occasion for all of us dancers.

1982 ended with the real highlight of the era for us—the beautiful wedding of teachers Elsa Isaac and Frank Bacher, Saturday, November 27m at St. Francis Solano Church in Sonoma. The friendship and love in Father Monegal's ceremony and the beauty of the wedding party in their ethnic costumes made the very rainy day a day of sunshine. Elsa was beautiful in her Hungarian costume, and equally beautiful in their Austrian dirndls were her sister, Margie McKhann of Santa Fe, N.M., and her two lovely daughters, Arwen and Kathy. Frank, in his ancestral Swiss Costume, was attended by his brother-in-law, Jack Browning and his brothers, Alfred and Edmund. The 320 friends and relations enjoyed the reception, delicious dinner, folk dancing, and wedding cake in the social hall at the church. They returned from their Disneyland and California Missions honeymoon in time for the Petaluma International Folk Dancers Christmas Party. We are, indeed, happy for this delightful couple and fortunate to have them as talented teachers as well as wonderful friends.

Mona Vera



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~ Guillermo Brizuela

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