

# Let's Dance!

THE MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING 63 DECEMBER 2025



THEN  
AND  
NOW

# Let's Dance!

Volume 82, No. 10

DECEMBER 2025

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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](http://www.folkdance.com) under the **Services** tab.

**Donations:** The Folk Dance Federation of California is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and donations are tax deductible! Gifts and donations are always welcome.

Send to:

Folk Dance Federation Treasurer

153 Race Street

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**Join now!** Membership rates (add \$15 for foreign addresses):

Individual: \$35/year

Household: \$45/year

Students: \$25/year (26 or under and at least half time)

Group/Club: \$40/year

Mail applications, renewals & checks to:

Folk Dance Federation of California, Inc.

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927 Springfield Drive, Millbrae, CA 94030

To post dance event flyers on the Federation's website, email: [webmaster@folkdance.com](mailto:webmaster@folkdance.com)

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**The deadline for *Let's Dance!* is the FIFTH 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.

Your advertising helps support *Let's Dance!* Please make checks payable to the **Folk Dance Federation**. Ad rates:

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**Mail checks to: Loui Tucker, Editor**  
**153 Race Street**  
**San Jose, CA 95126**

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**WELCOME NEW  
FEDERATION MEMBERS**  
Leslie Johnson-Tatsuta – Cupertino  
Fort Collins Folk Dance – Windsor, Colorado

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Laura Richardson

I was raised in a very progressive household. My brother and I were taught to respect and honor the beliefs and traditions of others and to be tolerant of different viewpoints. It seems that these broad-minded values are at odds with the increasingly rigid and judgmental value systems I observe around me. I believe that what is taught in childhood tends to stick, and I am firmly committed to trying to tolerate my fellow humans to the best of my ability.

However, some behavior just cannot be permitted in a civil society. Racism, sexism, and all forms of lawlessness, violence, prejudice and cruelty simply have no place in my world. These are trying times for people who feel as I do, that humanity needs to evolve past bigotry, fear, exploitation, exclusion and cruelty. I am reminded that joy, laughter, love, generosity, acceptance and kindness are available to all of us each day as weapons against the darkness. Being with people who share my values, as do my folk dance friends, makes me optimistic that we can, without a doubt, figure out how to evolve.

This time of year reminds me to be grateful for all the good people in my life. We are social creatures, and we thrive when our social bonds are strong, extended and vibrant. My dance community is an important part of my extended social network. I value and cherish the friendships I have found on the dance floor, and I am renewed by the hours I spend dancing. I always feel better after dancing – uplifted and energized. I have been so lucky to find great teachers, mentors, and friends to dance with over the years, and especially here in the San Francisco Bay area. I offer my thanks to all of you who keep folk dancing alive, and who work to pass the torch along to the next generation of dancers. It's been great dancing with you this year!

My special thanks to the members of the Board of the Folk Dance Federation of California who have guided me and helped to keep me on track. I am particularly thankful to Clem Dickey, Vice President; Sabine Zappe, Treasurer; Betsy Moore, Secretary; and Loui Tucker, our tireless editor of *Let's Dance!* magazine, and keeper of the history of our organization.

In addition, I wish to mention the contributions of several outstanding individuals who volunteer their time to help our organization thrive:

Laura Douglass	Finance
Lon Radin	Institutes
Lisa Michaels	Scholarships
Marija Hillis	Promotions
Lothar Narins	Research
Michael Giusto	Insurance
Marcia Rosenblatt	Membership
Craig Blackstone	Parliamentarian
Kevin Greek	Webmaster/Archives
Susan Gregory	Publications/Design



Laura Richardson.  
Photo by E. Khuner.

All of these individuals donate their precious time and talents to keep our organization strong. I cannot thank them enough.

My special thanks also to Margaret Lange, who orchestrated our Statewide event in Arroyo Grande this past year, and to Memo Keswick, who has taken on the challenge of organizing the June 2026 Statewide in Chico.

The Festival of the Oaks in Berkeley will be on February 7, 2026, so mark your calendars. During the lunch break we will hold our General Assembly of the Folk Dance Federation, and you are all invited to come to that meeting and learn about the work of the Board members who keep this organization humming. Perhaps it will inspire you to decide you can spare some time to join the Federation Board. We are always looking for new volunteers. Talk to any of us about how you can pitch in.

Look for information in this issue of *Let's Dance!* about next year's Statewide Festival in Chico the weekend of June 12-14, with a focus on Bulgarian and Turkish music and dancing, and with live music by Da! Mozhem. Register early for the best price!

Stay healthy and happy and keep moving to the beat!

**STATEWIDE 2026 – REGISTER EARLY  
FOR THE BEST PRICES! See pp. 23-24.**



# Jim Gold International Folk Tours 2026

Travel, adventure, fun, folk dance, culture

**INDIA:** Jan 24-Feb. 7, Nov. 3-18, 2026

Delhi, Udaipur, Pushkar, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Agra, Varnasi, Pushkar

## Middle East

**EGYPT:** Feb 19-March 1, 2026

Cairo, Nile River cruise, Luxor, Aswan

**ISRAEL:** March 1-12

Led by Lee Friedman and guided by Joe Freedman: Jerusalem, Masada, Tel Aviv, Galilee, Haifa, Safed, Golan Heights.



## Eastern Europe-The Balkans

**ALBANIA, GREECE, MACEDONIA and KOSOVO ext:** May 20-June 1-3

Led by Lee Otterholt, guided by Mili Mullanji: Tirana, Durres, Vlora Folk Festival, Kruja, Gjirokaster, Saranda, Berat, Lake Prespa, Ochrid

**CROATIA:** July 6-20

Led by Lee Otterholt Dubrovnik Folk Festival, Island of Korçula, Island of Hvar, Split, Zadar, Zagreb Folk Festival

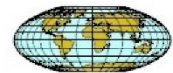
**BALKAN SPLENDOR ~ 5 COUNTRIES:** July 26-August 11

Led by Ventsi Milev: Bulgaria, Macedonia, Greece, Albania, Serbia,

**GREECE and the GREEK ISLANDS:** Oct 3-16

Led by Lee Otterholt, Maroula Konti, guide: Athens, Nauplia, Sparta, Olympia, Delphi, Meteora, Mycenae, and Epidaurus.

**Greek Island Cruise:** Mykonos, Crete, Rhodes, Patmos, Kusadasi



Travel  
broadens  
one!

## Western Europe

**SCANDINAVIA:** June 9-23

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

**IRELAND:** Aug 1-13

Led by Lee Friedman and guided by Kay Cleary: Galway, Connemara, Aran islands, Kerry, Cork, Blarney, Dublin.

**SPAIN:** Sept 11-24

Malaga, Ronda, Cadiz, Seville, Cordoba, Granada



## South America

**PERU-Nazca and Peruvian Amazon ext:** May 20-29

Lima, Cusco, Machu Picchu, Puno, Sacred Valley, Lake Titicaca, Peruvian Amazon, Nazca

**BRAZIL:** Nov 2-13

Led by Lee Otterholt Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Iguassu Falls

**ROMANIA, ARGENTINA, W. CANADA, E. CANADA**

See website for details



**[Jim Gold International Youtube Channel](#)** (Videos of folk dancing and folk tours)

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

Register on line at: [jimgold.com](http://jimgold.com) Jim Gold International, Inc.

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# Calendar of Events

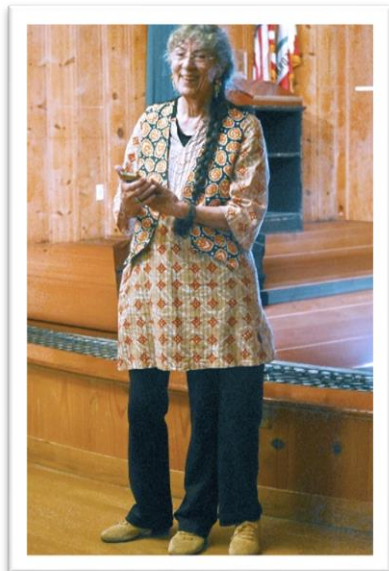
We reserve the right to edit all submissions; we assume no responsibility for accuracy.  
Additional events can be found at [folkdance.com](http://folkdance.com) (Community tab).

- NOV. 28-30 KOLO FESTIVAL.** Balkan music, singing, and dance. Croatian American Cultural Center, 60 Onondaga Avenue, San Francisco. Teaching staff: Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion, Roberto Bagnoli, Tanya Dimitrov, John Morovich, Maria Bebelekova. Five bands for evening dancing.
- DEC. 6 OLD WORLD CAROLERS RUBY JUBILEE BALL.** Monroe Hall, 1400 W. College Avenue in Santa Rosa. Join The Old World Carolers as they celebrate 40 years of singing for good causes. Waltz to old European carols. There will be a Scandinavian set also. Info: [rrebecca@sonic.net](mailto:rrebecca@sonic.net).
- DEC. 12 SMILE DANCERS NATIONAL POINSETTIA DAY PARTY.** 47111 Mission Falls Ct, Fremont. 1:30-4:00 pm. It's FREE! Dress in floral print or wear red and green; please bring a snack to share. Info: Rebecca Tsai at [tungtungrebecca@gmail.com](mailto:tungtungrebecca@gmail.com).
- DEC. 13 PALOMANIANS PIE PARTY.** St. Bede's Church Hall, 2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park. 3:30-6:30 pm. Dancing, plus pie and ice cream provided by the Palomanians. Emcee: Denise Heenan. Info: [pfdcparty@gmail.com](mailto:pfdcparty@gmail.com).
- DEC. 13 RAZZMATAZZ 'TIS THE SEASON HOLIDAY PARTY.** Monroe Hall, 1400 W. College Avenue in Santa Rosa. 7-10 pm. Live music with Gradina and Yabulka. \$5 admission, plus tips for the singers and musicians. Info: [marilynsmith@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marilynsmith@sbcglobal.net).
- DEC. 14 FOLK DANCE FEDERATION BOARD MEETING.** Via Zoom. 3:00-4:30 pm. Join the Folk Dance Federation for their board meeting. Various topics such as event planning, membership, scholarships, publicity, insurance, and budget are discussed. Zoom link at [folkdance.com/event](http://folkdance.com/event).
- DEC. 18 SARATOGA FOLK DANCERS HOLIDAY BLACK-AND-WHITE BALL.** St. Michael's Church, 18870 Allendale Avenue in Saratoga. 7:30-10:15 pm. \$5-\$10 sliding scale. The title says it all – wear black and/or white for that formal look. Refreshments for the table are welcome.
- DEC. 19 FAMILY NIGHT AT CHANGS.** Miraloma Park Clubhouse, 350 O'Shaughnessy Boulevard, San Francisco. 7-10 pm. \$8 (adults, first time is free; kids are always free!). An hour of fun dance activities to music from around the world followed by two hours of international folk dances from the club's repertoire.
- DEC. 20 CAFÉ SHALOM MONTHLY ISRAELI DANCE PARTY.** Congregation Am Tikvah, 625 Brotherhood Way, San Francisco. 7:30-11:30 pm. \$10. Info: [udy@yahoo.com](mailto:udy@yahoo.com) or 669-444-1284.
- DEC. 25 THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS NIGHT PARTY.** St. Bede's Church Hall, 2650 Sand Hill Road in Menlo Park. 7-10 pm. It's FREE! Come celebrate the holidays with us.
- DEC. 31 ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S EVE INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE PARTY AND LUCY CHANG MEMORIAL FUNDRAISER.** All Saints' Episcopal Church, 555 Waverley Street, in Palo Alto. 7 pm-12:15 am. The Moveable Feet team will host their annual potluck and dance party. IT'S FREE, so please consider making a generous donation to the Second Harvest Food Bank instead (at [impact.shfb.org/MoveableFeet25](http://impact.shfb.org/MoveableFeet25)). **See ad on p. 19.**



# THE FAMILY PHOTO ALBUM

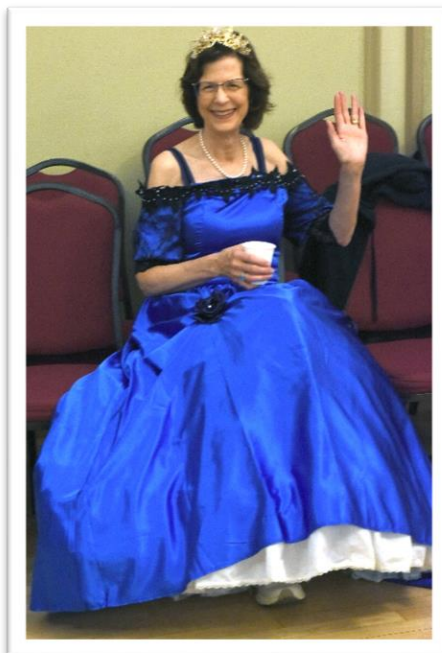
## *The Halloween edition*



Michel Hardbarger's third leg certainly caught everyone's eye at Changs' Family Night/Halloween Party.



Marc and Jan Rayman hosted a Halloween party with their Foothill International Folk Dancers in La Cañada. Too bad there wasn't enough room for the group photo.



The ball gown Sue La Fetra wore to the Saratoga Folk Dancers Halloween Party was very impressive, but she tied for second place. The contest winner? See p. 15.



The Cabrillo Dancers hosted Bulgarika, and it was NOT a Halloween party, but John Burke and Eileen Menteer posed for their photo.



Berkeley Folk Dancers combined a Halloween party with their Dance Selection Night. More on p. 14.

Alex Shadle, director of International Dance Arts Collective, addressed the audience before the Festivals of Light performance in early November in Roseville. A review and photos will be in the January issue of *Let's Dance!*



*Photos by A. Partos, G. Atherton, and L. Tucker.*

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GEORGE FAIRBROOK!

On December 28, 2025, George Fairbrook will be 99 years old, but don't let that big number fool you. George's dancing days are not over. He attended Stockton Folk Dance Camp this past summer in the evenings the first week, and he did not sit on the sidelines and watch others. He started attending Camp in 1988, missed some years here and there, but was there every year from 2000 through 2019. He was still driving himself from Stockton to dance events in the San Francisco Bay area such as the Heritage Festival in 2017. The cover of the May/June issue of *Let's Dance!* magazine showed George leading the line of dancers at the Camellia Festival in Roseville in 2019.

Although he stopped driving during the COVID shutdown, when dancing resumed in Turlock he was able to get rides with other dancers and danced with the Village Dancers. During this past year he moved from his apartment in Stockton, California, into an assisted living facility.

Below is George's story in his own words:

## Germany

In 1929 when I was two years old, I was lying on the grass outside our home in Berlin, Germany, and heard sounds of classical chamber music from inside the house. My father played cello, my mother the violin, my grandmother the piano, and a friend played viola. As a Jewish family, we left Germany in 1934, soon after Hitler became Chancellor, and moved to Ramat Gan, a suburb of Tel Aviv in the British Mandate of Palestine.

## Israel

We rented an apartment at a three-story house. The country at that time was called Palestine; it did not become Israel until 1948. Arabs and Jews lived mostly peacefully at that time. Due to unpleasant sandstorms, typhoid fever, and other reasons, we decided to leave Palestine and try to immigrate to the United States.

## Slovenia

After boarding a ship in Haifa for Europe, our money was running out, so we needed to find a cheap place to live while waiting for an appointment with an American consul. We found a farmer in a tiny village called Selca, near Ljubljana, Slovenia, who was willing to let the six of us live cheaply. After six months without getting an appointment, we heard that the U.S. Immigration Consul in Amsterdam, Holland, might be more lenient about letting us come to the States. After a few months in Amsterdam we did get an appointment and visas. We sailed for eight days from Rotterdam, Holland, to Ellis Island, New York, in a tramp steamer.

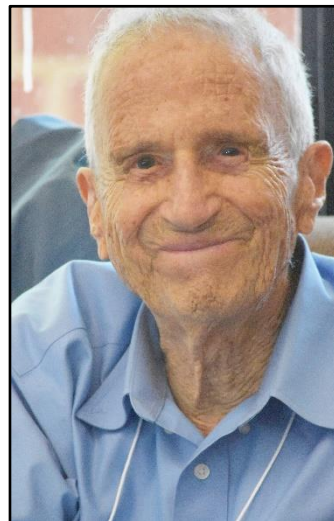
## New York

My father opened a retail store on 96th Street in Manhattan selling postage stamps to collectors. My teenaged siblings got odd jobs as a baby nurse and shining shoes. My mother was able to obtain a scholarship for me to attend a boarding school on a farm in Pawling, New York, for three years, where I learned how to milk a cow, do simple carpentry, and speak English.

The U.S. Army Draft Board rejected me because my "manner and speech were effeminate" (I didn't talk loudly about football), so I was able to go to high school during the war. While I was at New York's City College, I took Spanish classes and worked part-time at Dun & Bradstreet. I translated German and Spanish financial reports.

I met Ilse during an outing to hike in Bear Mountain State Park north of New York City. On weekends we would rent a car and drive to places such as Allentown, Pennsylvania which had a beautiful city park, a good diner, and a motel with indoor and outdoor swimming pools. We both worked, Ilse as a secretary for Hertz truck division, and I as a computer programmer for National Screen Service in New York.

*continued on p. 8.*



George in 2023. Photo by L. Tucker.



Ilse and George

**George Fairbrook – continued**

Ilse and I discovered folk dancing in 1986 while sightseeing along New York City’s waterfront, where an abandoned pier was used by various groups, one of which was a group of international folk dancers. They had a flyer which announced that every Tuesday evening, at 14th Street & 9th Avenue, there was a hall where they would dance. Ilse and I danced there almost every week until we moved to Stockton in 1988.

**Stockton**

In 1988, we quit our jobs and drove to Stockton, California, where my brother worked at the University. Ilse and I never had children, and we wanted to take part in my brother’s family life with four kids. I did computer work for San Joaquin County.

We enjoyed Stockton and found places to go folk dancing. In addition to the annual Stockton Folk Dance Camp, we heard about a folk dance group in Placerville where we danced often until Ilse’s death in 1996 from breast cancer. I later learned of additional dance clubs in Davis, Sacramento, and Turlock, so I would dance often by driving about 50 miles from Stockton.

About a year after my wife’s death, I heard about an international folk dance weekend in the Santa Cruz mountains, run by a San Francisco club. At that dance I met Marie, born in Cliffside Park, New Jersey, of Italian heritage. We became close friends and for the past 22 years have had a long-distance relationship. It’s long-distance because Marie finds Stockton boring and I find San Francisco too cold.

Marie’s parents did not teach her Italian when she was growing up. However, we both wanted to travel to Italy after reading *Under the Tuscan Sun*, so Marie studied Italian in San Francisco while I did so in Stockton.

I have become addicted to folk dancing since first discovering it, and I still dance several nights each week. I have always enjoyed many forms including ballroom, jazz, round, and square dancing, but I enjoy the rhythmic variety of folk dance music from different countries best. My favorite dances are from Israel, Poland, and the Balkan countries of Hungary, Macedonia, and Romania (to be honest, most of the dances from Bulgaria have steps too difficult for me).

During the COVID pandemic years, international folk dancing became possible on the internet via Zoom. In 2023 I decided to limit my driving by dancing only in my living room in front of a computer on Zoom, which I still enjoy several nights a week.



Marie and George dancing on board a ship.



George in April 2023, leading a dance from the left with the Village Dancers of Turlock.  
Photos by L. Tucker.



George dancing at Stockton Camp in 2025, below with Heidi Vorst.



Psst! George's email is gfairbrook@yahoo.com.



# Chamarrita - A Dance Form You've Never Heard of

by Loui Tucker

Well, maybe you have heard of Chamarrita, but I hadn't until a few weeks ago when I ran across the paragraph below in the April 1975 issue of *Let's Dance*. The writer was describing the upcoming Statewide Festival in Santa Maria:

There will also be a teacher who is new to everyone. Manuel Alberto Martins hails from the Azores Islands and presently makes his home in Santa Maria with his wife and three children. He will be teaching and calling the Portuguese Chamarrita in the style of his particular island, Fayal. It is a delightful couple dance mixer with **a caller who always dances with the people rather than using a microphone such as a square dance caller.** (emphasis mine).

Doesn't that description sound suspiciously like Salsa Rueda? I was immediately interested in Chamarrita, so I dropped what I was doing and dove down the rabbit hole of the internet in search of

information. Go ahead and take a look for yourself - a search on YouTube will yield numerous videos. In some videos, the dancers are dressed alike and appear to be part of performance or demonstration. There are others where the dancers are all dressed casually, sometimes in dance halls, other times at outdoor parties. It isn't hard to pick out the caller, usually but not always one of the men.



Indoors, to live music, one caller.

In one video over 14 minutes long, the caller changes every 3-4 minutes. From what I can tell (my Portuguese is non-existent), there is some agreement that one caller will stop, and another will take over

without missing a beat. This dance appears to attract both young and old, men and women, and they sure do look like they are having fun! I also discovered that the dance is done in North and South America where Portuguese communities have become established, and distinct regional styles have developed.

I wondered if there is any connection between Chamarrita and Salsa Rueda. Some sources acknowledge that there is a Portuguese community in Cuba, but nothing indicates that the Cubans who developed Salsa Rueda (also called Rueda de Casino) got the idea from watching Chamarrita. It was instead a result of taking the Casino style of dancing that emerged in the 1950s in Cuba and turning it into a mixing of couples.

Anyone interested in finding a local teacher to introduce this dance to our international dance community?



Outside, at night, to live music, multiple callers. *Both pictures are screenshots from videos.*

# My Video Gems

by Derise Larson Wigand

Reno International Folk Dance Co-op

I am not your deep-diving internet user on the lookout for lots of folk dance videos. However, in looking online now and then for support to remember some dance from my ancient past, I've stumbled across a couple of folk dance videos that I really liked. I check back in now and then to savor some wonderful dancing and live music, especially since we don't get so many dance options here in Reno. In addition, YouTube usually connects me to other similar dance videos, so I get a goodly dose.

I wanted to share three recent favorites that I would recommend, depending on your personal interests. Just google the keywords in each title and they should pop up on YouTube.

**NYC Hungarian flashmob.** This video was taken in front of a New York City museum with dancers in full costume and several musicians in typical flashmob style. The guys are simply dressed in black vests with white shirts, but the gals have wonderful full-skirted costumes – wow! Lots of twirling and boot slapping with a few glimpses of the audience and musicians right there on the street.



**Am Schulhof mit Zillertaler Manda.** This is a lively dance party perhaps at a local street festival. Zillertaler Manda is a two-man band doing a nice set of Tyrolean music for a crowded dance party with a broad array of costuming from traditional dirndls and knee pants and jackets with great decorated hats to people in modern street clothes. My German isn't good enough to understand all the great singing although one song is definitely about the great life of a *bauer* [farmer] and another about Tyrol. It includes some lovely yodeling that reminds me of the old

Disney Snow White scene with the fun organ and dancing with the dwarfs – aha! It's based on Tirolean music!

The Zillertaler Manda have several videos out there, but this one with the dance party is my favorite. I just wanna dance! And Google will definitely connect you to some great plattle videos of various Bavarian dance groups slapping their lederhosen.

**Beltane Border Morris Mayday fire dance.** This is my latest obsession. I was just trying to find video to remember the Shepherd's Hey and stumbled on this. How little I knew of this other form of Morris dancing! This group of some dozen dancers in their black tatter jackets and boots and hats and black-painted face masks do great stick dancing with some really complex patterns to lively Celtic-type music with fiddler, drummers and electric guitar.



They have quite a few other videos online including various versions of this Fire Dance (see also Kitty Jay and Grey Wethers among those). I hope you find the one showing the dancers entering the highway/stage right in front of you with maybe a squirrel tail on the back of one hat. That one shows the dancing best, plus you feel like you were with them early that Mayday morning somewhere in Britain.

The border, I eventually found out, refers to the border between England and Wales; Beltane refers to some kind of traditional Celtic Mayday celebration. And note that the black faces are a controversial topic among Morris dancers. It's so different from the Cotswold style of Morris in white with bells that I knew of before. I have to confess that I've seriously considered building my own tatter jacket for a dancer Halloween costume.

I hope you will consider sending in your own Video Gems to *Let's Dance!* magazine to share with other readers and dancers. There are so many nice dance videos out in cyberspace!

*Pictures are screenshots from YouTube videos.*

# SPEAKING OF DANCING

by Gigi Jensen

## Making Dance Magic One Costume at a Time

I have a Seattle folk dance memory that was my first “Wow! This folk dancing stuff is kinda cool!” moment. In about 1979, I met my father and his wife at the Seattle Center’s Food Circus for dinner. It is a very large building built for the 1962 Seattle World Fair. There happened to be a Scandinavian dance party going on. The center floor had at least 100 couples dancing, all dressed in Scandinavian outfits. It apparently was a regular thing. The images of all those beautifully dressed dancers filling the room with twirling colors and smiles have stayed with me more than 45 years later. (It was not the Northwest Folklife Festival, but if anyone knows about those parties, please fill me in.)

I had a similar experience on going to my first *milonga* (Argentine tango party) in San Francisco in 1997. It was at a place called the Verdi Club, the Italian-American club on Mariposa Street. The music lured you in. The lights were *a media luz* (half-light). The large floor was filled with dancing couples. The ladies were dressed in pretty dresses and the men in sport jackets and slacks. I had stepped into another world, and it was magical.

Clothing’s importance in dancing started growing on me when Nuevo Tango became the rage in the early 2000s. Young people started wearing stretchy jeans and dance sneakers to classes and parties. They were doing the kinds of athletic dance moves normally seen on the stage – flying kicks and intertwined legs – moves you cannot do in a sport coat or a cocktail dress. The dance parties started to look like *prácticas* (practice sessions).

When our dance company, Ballet Pampa Argentina, performed in shows and at festivals, the dancers wore custom-made costumes. They served the function of sharing Argentina’s dance history and culture. They were made for the purpose of sharing larger-than-life movements or to evoke a historical era. Each style dictated the movements. The costumes were made of fabric that didn’t wrinkle, that stretched where needed, and didn’t ride up, exposing too much flesh. They were not practical for daily life, but they functioned well on stage.

Now here’s the folk dance connection:

As I talk to people about clothes and costumes used for dancing, certain themes keep emerging. In

some cases, the clothing dictates the dance steps. Tight kimonos and *geta* (wooden shoes) demand small steps, and wide draping sleeves allow for greater movement of arms and hands. The long sleeves that Georgian dancers wear are to ensure that skin doesn’t touch skin, keeping to traditional cultural prohibitions.



In other cases, clothing is used to further the aims of the dancers. Bulgarian women performers will hold on to the belts of the women dancing on either side rather than use a basket hold, allowing for some twisting of their bodies. In Mexican *folklorico*, dancers depend on the chains sewn into the hem of their skirts to create flying butterfly shapes. A man dancing Hungarian dances will take advantage of the moving weight of his partner’s heavy skirt as he twirls her.

Folk dance costumes serve another function: they catch the imagination. And that was what I experienced at the Seattle Center. The folk dancing I get to experience now is generally pretty informal. Folks are dressed in the kinds of comfy clothes you wear around the house or out to do errands. This makes sense for dance classes. However, maybe here in the US we’ve grown too accustomed to our informality.

I’m told that back in the early decades (1940-80), dressing in costumes was the norm. Some people even went to other countries, purchased clothing, and wore them to dance in back home. I’ve come to realize that one of the big attractions of folk dance is that you get to go somewhere else, maybe even to another time, and it’s often a magical experience. Perhaps it’s time to share that magic with future dancers just waiting for the invitation to join in the kind of special feeling you get when you join the circle.

A big thank you to Brooke Byrne of the Geary Dance Center in San Francisco, Ellie Wiener, and Loui Tucker for also wanting to talk about costumes.

I’m always interested to hear what you have to say about the things I write. Contact me at [gigi@tangoandmoredance.com](mailto:gigi@tangoandmoredance.com).

# FROM THE EDITOR

## While Indexing *Let's Dance!* Magazines



Onward to the mid-1970s! Many *Let's Dance!* readers began dancing in these years, so some of the names and events will be familiar.

March 1974: Dates for your calendar include a women's workshop six-week session; Trinidad Carnival Ballet at the Flint Center; Aman Folk Ensemble at San Jose State; a San Diego Folk Dance Concert; a small but growing group at Folk Dance for Singles; the Santa Maria Institute with Alexandru David. And the energy crisis is forcing schools to turn off their lights at 9 pm.

April 1974: The Sacramento Folk Dance Council currently has 11 folk dance clubs and 200 associate members. In 1943, the first Sacramento folk dance club was limited to couples 25-60 years old with *maximum weight requirements* (160 lbs. for ladies and 200 lbs. for men). Practice sessions were 2½ hours. That group joined the Folk Dance Federation in 1946. By 1950, over 30 Sacramento dance clubs had joined the Federation.

September 1974: Larry Getchel reported on adventures he and his wife had in Sweden. They attended a local Folk and Fiddle Festival involving 60-100 fiddlers and nearly 100 dancers. In Delsbo, they heard about a 200-fiddler event there and a Hambo contest coming in July that would attract 40-50,000 spectators, and 2,000 Hambo dancers already entered (including four couples from California). The contest is held on the highway – the only place big enough – and special shoes are worn and worn out for the contest.

November 1974: There is a folk festival at Stanford Shopping Center coming up in April 1975 with two days of dancing, exhibitions, and live music. Ensemble International danced at the half-time of a 49er football game at Candlestick Park.

February 1975: Eleanor Bacon and her Costume Research Committee have completed the Costume Basics book, on sale for \$2 at local parties, or send \$2.25 to cover postage and it will be mailed. Topics include Basic Blouse Patterns, How to Enlarge a Sleeve, Lining a Vest, Men's Baggy Pants, Turning Corners with Wide Flat Braid, and Lederhosen Ideas.

February 1975: Twelve individuals and 11 couples have become associate members of the Federation. Most of the new members are from California but Alura Flores lives in Mexico, there is a couple from Michigan and another from Texas, a man from the Canal Zone, and a woman from Colorado.

July 1975: A museum in Norway seeks back issues of *Let's Dance!* If you have any of the nine issues mentioned, please mail them to Vi Dexheimer. Effective Oct 1, subscription rates will go from \$4/yr to \$5/yr. Associate membership will go from \$2/yr to \$3/yr. Single issues of *Let's Dance!* will rise to 60¢.

January 1976: A teenaged group in Fresno (the Teeners) has been performing/entertaining at local rest homes. The Friday Night Family Class is growing, with more people attending each week. Some of the members performed for the first time at a recent church potluck. The audience had such a good time they asked the church to set up its own folk dance group, which starts in January.

April 1976: In an article about colonial dress (it was the bicentennial year), it was noted that, during the War for Independence, while women's clothing styles were still influenced by the English and French court, fabrics changed because women didn't want to buy cloth from England. They used locally-made cloth – cotton, linen and wool – instead of imported brocades, silks, and velvet. Men no longer wore imported wigs – just their hair, sometimes powdered with cornstarch and tied back.

May 1976: Jo Buttita's class hosted its annual Sweethearts Ball and 300 dancers attended. This event honored the couples who met and married in her folk dance class – 38 as of 1976!

**WANTED** -- Back issues of LET'S DANCE Magazine, 1948 and before. We have most issues 1949 to present. Will pay 50¢/copy if good. Contact David Thompson, 3671 Dover St, Napa 94558.  
**WANTED** -- Old time Folk Dance Records, before 1960. Pay up to \$3 depending on condition and folk dance. Contact David Thompson, 3671 Dover St, Napa, Ca 94558.

In the 1970s, there were classified ads in the back of every issue. Cost? \$1 per issue for up to three lines.

# Talking About How Teachers Teach

by Anna King

On Saturday, November 11, the National Folk Organization (NFO) hosted a special broadcast via Zoom. “Exploring Teaching Strategies for Folk Dance” focused on the art and craft of teaching dance. Co-sponsored by two of NFO’s committees – F.O.L.K. Chats and The Mentoring Project (TMP) – three notable folk dance professionals were asked to share their tips, tricks, and strategies for effective teaching. France Bourque-Moreau (Quebec), Bruce Hamilton (California), and Sue Hulsether (Wisconsin) collectively brought more than 100 years of teaching experience to the conversation.

Speaking on behalf of TMP, Gigi Jensen said they were very happy with the results. This was TMP’s second presentation about dance teaching mentorships (Bianca de Jong was the first, in 2023). “Imagine three dance friends sitting around the table to talk about their lives as teachers. For dancers and other dance teachers wanting to learn about and celebrate their dance wisdom, this was a great moment to be invited to listen.”

From the panelists’ view, this was an interesting proposition. They don’t often get to talk about the pedagogy of dance teaching. Sue Hulsether remarked, “It was very rewarding for me to think through and list



some of the key points of good teaching. A nice mindset for me! I also really enjoyed the introduction to the work of both France and Bruce.”

Topics were agreed upon in advance with the panelists. Denise Heenan, a master teacher in her own right, was the moderator. She kept the conversation flowing, and even surprised the panelists with the unexpected question, “Tell us something about yourself that we don’t already know.” In addition to being well-known master teachers, they are also our dance friends, and it was fun to get to know them a bit better.

Some 115 people attended from all over the US and even Canada. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions in real time via Zoom. The full video of “Exploring Teaching Strategies for Folk Dance” will be available for viewing on the NFO website. See [nfo-usa.org/nfo\\_folk\\_chats/](https://nfo-usa.org/nfo_folk_chats/).

## TURKEY May 6<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> and ARMENIA May 23-June 8 (tentative dates) in 2026 with TINEKE & MAURITS van Geel and AHMET DEMIRBAGH



Join Ahmet Demirbagh and Tineke and Maurits van Geel, your passionate tour leaders and specialists in these inspiring dance and culture journeys. The Turkey tour sold out within just 3 days! You can still sign up for the waiting list.

The Armenia tour already has a guaranteed departure too. For full details, visit our website:

<https://www.tinekevangeel.nl/tours/>

Adventure, culture, and dance await—don’t miss this unique experience!

# NEWS FROM AROUND THE BAY...

## RAZZMATAZZ – Marilyn Smith

The first week in November every year, we have our **Day of Remembrance** during which we honor those folk dancers we've lost over the years. Marguerite Treat assembled a collection of photos on poster boards over the years and now Kathy Pooler carries on this tradition and displays these in our dance hall. It is our way to remember, cherish, and never forget those people who were such an important part of our folk dance community. Steve Ayala leads us in the beautiful Armenian dance Mom Bar each year as we lower the hall lights and hold tealight candles.



Dancing Mom Bar. Photo by E. Torgerson.

Our annual holiday folk dance party, which will take place **Saturday, December 13** also falls on Santa Lucia Day this year. Gradina will sing the Santa Lucia song as part of our celebration. Lucia, the seven-year-old granddaughter of Gradina member Elin Power, will be dressed in the traditional white dress and red sash and wear a crown of candles (battery-powered for safety). She will carry a basket of Swedish saffron buns, which Rebecca Dwan has offered to bake.

We hope you can join us at Monroe Hall in Santa Rosa for this evening of live music and songs with Gradina and Yabulka and, of course, our special song with Lucia!

By the way, **Marina Troost has been doing a great job introducing new dancers to folk dancing** during the first hour (5:30-6:30) that Razzmatazz meets on Tuesdays. The beginners' class doesn't meet during December, but it starts up again in February. If there is a dancer in your life who would benefit from a weekly dose of folk dancing, tell them about this class!

## NORTH BAY – Carol Friedman

We had fun dancing to live music with the band **Bulgarika on October 27**. We also took time to do **dances for Halloween**, including Dimna Juda Mamo (Macedonia), Mom Bar (Armenia), Tarina de la Abrud (Romania), Bepundak Katan (Israel), Monster Mash (U.S.) and a waltz to The Parting Glass (Wailin' Jennys).

**Our fall session in Petaluma at Hermann Sons Hall runs through Monday, December 15**. After that, we will take a break and resume in January 2026.

As always, we dance to old and new favorites, including Jerusalem (South Africa), Zek Zek Dadumle (Bulgaria), and Rodopsko Horo (Bulgaria). And we dance to all requests. Come join us anytime; newcomers and drop-ins are always welcome.

## BERKELEY FOLK DANCERS

The Berkeley Folk Dancers **combined their Dance Selection Night with a Halloween Request Dance Party** on October 31. During the first hour the assembled members watched groups of dancers demonstrate 16 dances from a wide variety of sources.



BFD members reviewed their notes before voting (left). Andy Partos and Renée Marchese (right) dressed for the occasion. More Halloween photos on p. 6. Photos by L. Tucker.



Then they voted and the top five vote-getters that will be trial dances next year were:

- Sonata – non-partner – Israel
- Firetur – set dance – Denmark
- Cranberry Tart – set dance – Scotland
- Tres Deseos – mixer – Latin style
- La Berceuse Valsée – mixer – Canada

Looking ahead, **BFD's annual Monte Toyon retreat is January 30-February 1**, and Loui Tucker

# ... AND BEYOND

will be our guest instructor this year (see p. 16). If you'd like to register, visit Berkeley Folk Dancers' website: [berkeleyfolkdancers.org](http://berkeleyfolkdancers.org).

And save the date **Saturday, February 7** for the **Festival of the Oaks**, an East Bay tradition since the 1960s! Andy Taylor will be the guest teacher this year. See p. 20.

## SANTA ROSA FOLK DANCE – *Bill Livingston*

When COVID-19 shut everything down, Elsa Bacher was still teaching the class in Santa Rosa that she and her husband Frank had formed so many years ago. When it was possible to restart our class a few years later, changes had to be made.

Elsa's medical issues made it impossible for her to continue, so we no longer had access to the venue where we'd spent so many joyful hours. In addition, many of our members were gone or no longer dancing.

**We were determined to revive the afternoon class**, and Santa Rosa's Dance Center kindly gave us the use of one of its good wood-floored studios. We settled on a new time: **Tuesdays, 1:15-2:30**, and **we happy few began to dance again!**

Our repertoire is mostly drawn from the Federation's vast list, dances we've known for years, and without a trained teacher we all rely on each other for guidance. We are a bit more focused on Balkan and Israeli dances than in the past, which reflects the enthusiasms of our current group.

Of Elsa's class there are now only two of us who dance regularly and two who often attend, but still our numbers have grown bit by bit. Joining us are some experienced dancers who like having another place to dance. There are also dancers who prefer a day class over an evening one, some folks who are coming back to dancing after many years, and even some new to dancing who fall in love with it. The experienced dancers make a point of welcoming them all.

I try to keep things a bit organized by providing a list of all the dances, noting YouTube videos that are helpful, and sending out a Sunday morning e-mail listing the dances for the coming Tuesday. At times I provide a bit of coaching, although I'm no teacher.

We owe a debt to the Santa Rosa Dance Center and its great staff for the space, the sound system, the big parking lot and the convenient location easily accessible from Highway 101. Recently some folks

from further away discovered that the nearby SMART station is a comfortable way to skip the drive.

We hope to keep the Bachers' class thriving. If you'd like to know more, you can call or text me at 707-327-8180 or email [livingstonwilliam@att.net](mailto:livingstonwilliam@att.net).



The Santa Rosa Folk Dancers meet Tuesday afternoons.  
*Photo by B. Livingston.*

## PENINSULA COUNCIL – *Clem Dickey*

**Congratulations to Hollis Radin for winning Best Costume at Saratoga's Halloween Party.** Hollis came as The Cat In the Hat with an impressively tall hat and Seussian umbrella. Hollis adorned the hat and umbrella with characters from the book including the fish and Things One and Two. One of the second place winners was Sue La Fetra, shown in her bright blue ball gown in the Family Photo Album (p. 6). Audene Merrilees, shown below, left, tied for second place. Lesley Bone is the club's Decorations Maven and always makes the dance hall look festive.

*continued on p. 17.*



*Photo by L. Tucker.*



*Photo by C. Dickey.*

# Berkeley Folk Dancers

## Monte Toyon Weekend

January 30 through February 1, 2026

What a lovely combination! Folk dancing and friends, all in the beautiful nature near Aptos. Join us for a weekend in the verdant redwoods with teacher **Loui Tucker**. Loui plans to poll attendees regarding their interests and will draw from her repertoire gathered during her 45+ years of teaching international folk dance. Be prepared for interesting and enjoyable dances to inspiring music.



- International dances
- Morning classes 9 am to 12 noon, Saturday and Sunday
- Culture Corner 1 pm, Saturday
- All-request dance parties, Friday and Saturday evenings
- Lots of other fun!

Monte Toyon camp is located near Santa Cruz, outside of Aptos. Activities start with dinner Friday evening, 6pm, and end after lunch on Sunday. Saturday afternoon options are culture corner with Loui or possibly walking the beaches, hiking through the redwoods, visiting the nearby towns or the monarch butterflies at the state park ...



Photo credit: Andy Partos

For more information and the registration form go to:

[www.berkeleyfolkdancers.org](http://www.berkeleyfolkdancers.org)

Please register as soon as possible to reserve your spot.  
To register pay deposit of \$50 or in full \$320 by December 1.  
Full payment due by December 20.

Questions? Contact Chris Johnston (510) 520-5764 or  
[chrisnina@gmail.com](mailto:chrisnina@gmail.com)

[Non-BFD members may register after December 1]

## News from Around the Bay – continued

On October 9 Ann Kleiman and her team decorated the Saratoga hall with pictures and remembrances from **Muriel Maher's memorial**. Muriel was a frequent winner of Best Costume Contest at past Saratoga parties and was featured in the news media several times in her role as a consumer affairs investigator for Santa Clara County.

Palomanians have learned Broadway, Hora lui Emil, and **Schottish-bugg från Eslöv, a Swedish dance learned by Lon and Hollis Radin** from Roo Lester.

We have several traditional holiday parties coming up. Please note the last, **the Moveable Feet fundraiser for Second Harvest Food Bank. PLEASE DONATE**, whether or not you can make the party: [impact.shfb.org/MoveableFeet25](http://impact.shfb.org/MoveableFeet25).

**SAN FRANCISCO GROUPS** – Linda Milhoan Changs International Folk Dancers have had a busy and bustling autumn. **Our Family Night attendance continues to grow** with Changs' kids and kids from other nearby dance groups, accompanied by their families of course, dancing to an interesting program presented by Michel Hardbarger.

We recently learned about a **Baltic dance group in Noe Valley**. When we get a chance to attend, we'll share our observations with *Let's Dance!* readers.

Our Changs family has been traveling. We've welcomed Cindy Blackstone back from a medical mission in Peru. We just said farewell to Anne Zelinsky, who is relocating to Iceland. We hope she brings us an Icelandic folk dance when she comes back to SF for a visit. Matt Miller celebrated his 75th birthday with a tour of Croatia. Several of our dancers visited Japan and Romania.

Looking ahead, on the first two Fridays in January, Jeanne-Marie Hughes, Alex Hosmer and Sophia Hosmer-Hughes will be teaching us Salsa Rueda.

We wish you all good health and happy dancing in the new year!

## WANT A 2026 WALL CALENDAR?

Have you seen the new 2026 Folk Dance Federation wall calendar? Do you want one for yourself? **How about buying a few to give as gifts?**

### Your options:

Mail a check for \$13 made payable to Folk Dance Federation with "Calendar" on the memo line to Treasurer, Sabine Zappe, 153 Race Street, San Jose, CA 95126. [The \$3 covers mailing costs.]

For more than one calendar, add \$5 *total* postage (media mail) and send your check as noted above.

Or pay online at <http://store.folkdance.com>.

Check with your local teacher. Some of them have a supply.

## GIVE THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP!

Are you scratching your head over some of the people on your holiday gift list? If they are folk dancers, why not give them **the gift of a one-year membership** in the Folk Dance Federation? It's just \$35 for an individual or \$45 for a couple, and one of the most noticeable benefits is that they will receive *Let's Dance!* magazine 10 times a year, delivered to their mailbox. Such a deal!

Send a check made payable to *Folk Dance Federation* to Membership Chair Marcia Rosenblatt, 927 Springfield Drive, Millbrae, CA 94030, and provide the name and address of the recipient of your special gift. You can also pay online at [folkdance.com/join/register](http://folkdance.com/join/register).



# Dancing with Children

by Loui Tucker

I got an email in early October from a program director at the Children's Musical Theater in San Jose. One of their production teams was rehearsing for a production of *Fiddler on the Roof* in November and the staff wanted to help the kids "get into the Jewish spirit and traditions" by giving them a dance class. They had contacted the local Jewish Community Center, which sent them to me.

I was told that the group they had in mind would be 60-80 budding young actors ages 11-15, with dance experience and boundless energy and enthusiasm. Did they have a big enough room? Absolutely! How long would this dance session be? About an hour. Would there be other adults in the room or would I be wrangling 60-80 young people who didn't know me from Eve? The director, choreographer, stage manager and program director would be there.

Gulp! Okay, I'll be there.

I had an amazing time! Those kids were terrific – eager, focused, joyful, and willing to try anything. Not a single reluctant or shy youngster. After some initial introduction and instructions ("I talk, you listen"), I started with basic steps. I quickly discovered that they were used to being taught choreography standing in lines with the instructor in front of them doing the opposite footwork, so the instructor acts as a mirror for them. I had them in a big circle so everyone could see me, but the dancers in the circle facing me had to adjust to not dancing as if they were looking at a mirror. ("Use your ears and your eyes. Don't just watch – listen.")

After that it was smooth sailing. I got them through two circle dances (Hora Medura and Lo Ahavti Dai), a couple dance (Adama Admati), a line dance (Hineh Ma Tov), and a final, challenging high-energy, hip-hop-sounding number (Banu Le Ha'ir et Ha'ir). With 10 minutes left in the hour, they opted to dance the last three one more time.

We may never see any of them at our dance clubs or parties – after all, their goal is a life on stage – but they got a taste of what folk dancing has to offer.



Frank and Jane Tripi (above, seated center) gathered with their Scandinavian dancers for a Halloween party.

## Celebrating 42 years of Scandi Dancing

Frank and Jane Tripi shared a photo of their Scandinavian dancers at their 2025 Halloween party. The class meets Thursday nights, 7-10 pm, at the Oakland Nature Friends at 3115 Butters Drive. Frank and Jane started this class in 1983 and have met continuously and weekly for the past 42 years. Congratulations to the Scandi Dancers of Oakland!



Loui with children, seated center. Photo by D. Zell.

# DON'T MISS THE ANNUAL *New Year's Eve* International Folk Dance Party and *Lucy Chang Memorial Fundraiser*

sponsored by the Moveable Feet Club

**December 31, 2025**

7 pm – 12:15 am

**All Saints' Episcopal Church**

555 Waverley Street, Palo Alto (same location)

Emcee: Loui Tucker

***This event is free!***

Please consider making a generous donation to Second Harvest Food Bank!

**Help us reach our \$9,000 goal! (We raised over \$14,000 last year!)**

➔ Donate early to Second Harvest Food Bank at [impact.shfb.org/MoveableFeet25](https://impact.shfb.org/MoveableFeet25) so your support is available immediately  
**-OR-**

➔ Bring cash, checks, or cellphone (if you plan to use a credit card) to the party. You can also bring cans of food, jars (peanut butter), bags (rice, pasta), and boxes (cereal, cake mix) to be delivered to SHFB.

*Parking is free in downtown Palo Alto on New Year's Eve, with no time limits.*

Info: [MoveableFeetClub@gmail.com](mailto:MoveableFeetClub@gmail.com)

**Potluck dinner**  
7~8 pm  
Bring a favorite dish!  
Moveable Feet provides drinks, plates, and utensils.



**SCAN ME!**



# While You're Listening to the Music, This Is What I'm Hearing

*from your friendly emcee*

"What's with all the couple dances tonight? Play something Balkan!"

"You've hardly played any Israeli dances tonight!"

"I finally have a great partner. Can you play more couple dances?"

"The new dances from Camp are great! I just love them!"

"I don't like any of these new dances. How about playing some old favorites?"

"Why all these fast dances? You want us all to have heart attacks? I did enough sweating at the gym today!"

"Hey, pick up the pace! Too slow, too slow! Gotta dance off my stress!"

"You are planning to play DANCE X tonight, aren't you?"

"Do you have to play DANCE X every week? Some of us are really getting tired of it..."

"I can never get here in time for the lessons, so I don't know any of the new dances you're playing. Can't you put on something I know?"

"You play the same dances every week. Surprise us with some different ones!"

"Where are you getting all these weird dances tonight? I've never even seen some of them! Play some dances everyone knows!"

"My friend here is a beginner. Play some easy dances for him, okay?"

"What's with all these beginner dances tonight? You want all the advanced dancers to leave, or what?"

Look around the room. See all those dancers? It's a lot like having a job with multiple supervisors. Some of you have been dancing for 30 years and others have been dancing for 30 days. You each have your likes and dislikes. You have favorite dances and other dances you can't stand. We read your requests, we welcome your comments and suggestions, and we try to present a balanced program of dances with something for everyone.



**Save the date!**

***Festival of the Oaks***

**Saturday, February 7, 2026**

**Morning workshops & afternoon  
dance party – 9:00 am - 5:00 pm**

**Live Oak Recreation Center  
1301 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA**

***Featuring: Andy Taylor  
teaching dances from  
Carpathian Europe.***

# What's Up Down South?

– News from Southern California –

## REVIEW OF FALL CAMP

by Stacy Rose

This year, I thoroughly enjoyed my inaugural visit to Fall Camp. Held on the campus of Brandeis University in Simi Valley, California, Fall Camp was three days of great dance instruction, fun dance parties, good food, super accommodations, excellent companionship, and a wide variety of social activities. The fall-themed camp coincided with Halloween weekend this year. The festive decor immediately evoked fun!

The Friday night dance party theme was Halloween; the Saturday night dance party theme was fall. Dancers were encouraged to write dance requests on a whiteboard. The emcees (there were many) did a fine job of integrating requests into the evening party playlists.

The featured teacher was Catherine Rudin. Diane Baker wrote an extensive and compelling biography of Catherine at the Fall Camp website. Catherine gave a fascinating cultural presentation about the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. Over the weekend, she taught these ten dances:

Banumarocsini (Moldvai-Csángo)  
Bulgáros (Moldvai-Csángo)  
Hovivi Yerk (Armenia)  
Mugurdancis (Latvia)  
Ženski Čapraz (Bulgaria-Trakia)

Beratis (Berat, Epirus – now Albania)  
Cîntec (Cântec) (Romania)  
Mistrínská (Czech/Moravian)  
Ronde de Chantecorps (Poitou, France)  
Žensko Čamče (Macedonia)

A unique feature of Fall Camp is having several local teachers review popular dances taught at Stockton Folk Dance Camp. Local teachers presented nine more dances. They included Diane Baker (Karčmaročka and Kolomijki), Valerie Daley (Hegi), Marcella Lawson (Dol'ava Karička and Zoriuszka) and Marc Rayman (Bourrée à Deux Temps, Idu Domiř, Idu, Sobótki, and Papadhopanayiotena, which had been taught at SFDC in 1993).

A longtime Fall Camp tradition is having campers fashion a head wreath. I saw dancers wearing their beautiful head wreaths and hair ornaments all weekend long. New this year, Toti O'Brien set up an origami table near the camp puzzle table. For people who enjoy crafting, Fall Camp offers an opportunity for craft creativity.



Dancing at the Halloween Party. Photo by A. La Fetra.



The author, Stacy Rose, center, with Alicia La Fetra and Catherine Rudin.

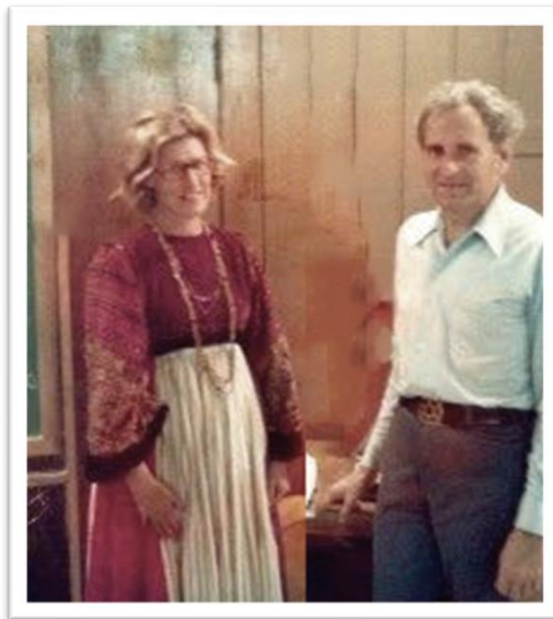
But wait! There's SO much more (including two wine and cheese receptions)!

The Saturday and Sunday morning schedules started with an hour-long nature walk, led by Jan Rayman. Southern California delivered warm weather and clear skies at night, which came in handy for the Saturday evening Star Gazing with a Rocket Scientist. Marc Rayman led this session, binoculars in hand. And although the moon was almost full, making it difficult to see the stars, the group managed to see some interesting stars and China's space station.

*continued on p. 22*

## FROM THE *LET'S DANCE!* PHOTO ARCHIVES

*In the last issue*



That's Kathy and Marcel Vinokur in a photo taken at one of their monthly parties in Menlo Park.



The contest this month is to identify the accordion player. Send your guess to [editor@folkdance.com](mailto:editor@folkdance.com) or [loui@loutitucker.com](mailto:loui@loutitucker.com). The THIRD person who submits the correct answer will receive a \$25 gift card.

## WE HAVE A WINNER!

Last month's photo taken at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 1985 showed roughly 35 of the teaching staff, Board members, and support staff. The Palomanians put their collective heads together and came up with all but one of the names! As you can imagine, Denise Heenan supplied the bulk of the names, but the \$50 gift card will go toward the Palomanians' decorating and refreshments budget for future parties. Four other readers or groups sent in a list with over 18 names. I guess I'll have to make the contest harder next time! [Sorry, I am not going to supply all the names.]

### REVIEW OF FALL CAMP – *continued*

One of the very special parts of Fall Camp for me was playing in the Potluck Band. After getting registered, campers were sent general camp information, including an invitation to play or sing in the potluck band. Of course with different campers attending each year, the instrumentation of the band changes. Thus the name Potluck Band! This year the band had cello, recorders, penny whistle, guitar, ukulele, piano, and percussion. (In previous years, there have been a saxophone, French horn, violin, and electric guitar!) The Potluck Band leader Terry Gucwa arranges musical scores for whatever instrumentation is needed each year.

At the Saturday night party, the band played for the dances Idam Ne Idam, Eleno Kerko, Idu Domil, Idu, and Amore Mio. I loved playing in the woodwind section with Terry's wife and Camp Registrar Mindy Belli (who played soprano and alto recorders).

I found Fall Camp to be a warm and welcoming environment for this first-time camper. If you're looking for a weekend experience with a wide variety of activities, I hope to see you at Fall Camp next year!



The Potluck Band in action. *Photo by A. La Fetra.*

# Statewide Folk Dance Festival

June 12-14, 2026

Chico, CA



“Kotse” Marinov  
Bulgarian Dances



Petar Aleksiev  
Bulgarian Music



Ahmed Lüleci  
Turkish Dances

Teaching during days.

Evening Parties with **Da! Mozhem**,  
playing International Folk Dances

Register by  
Jan. 31 for an  
Early Bird  
Discount

Friday/Saturday: First Christian Church  
295 E. Washington Avenue

Fri: Doors open **Noon** – Ends 10 pm

Sat: Doors open 9 am – Ends 10 pm

Sunday: Chico Women’s Club, 3rd & Pine Street

Doors open 9 am – Ends **Noon**

For more info or to register: <http://statewide.folkdance.com>  
or contact [memokeswick@gmail.com](mailto:memokeswick@gmail.com)

# STATEWIDE 2026 FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL



**Theme: "Village Dance -- What is it anyway?"**

**June 12-14, 2026, at:**

**Fri-Sat: First Christian Church, 295 E Washington Avenue, Chico, CA**

**Sun: Chico Women's Club, Third & Pine Streets, Chico, CA**

**(Doors open at noon on Friday and 9 am Saturday and Sunday)**



Ahmet Lüleci  
Turkish dance



"Kotse" Marinov  
Bulgarian dance



Petar Aleksiev  
Bulgarian Music

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred e-mail &/or Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**FESTIVAL PACKAGE (meals separate) (Do NOT mail after June 6; pay at door.)**

(Includes ALL classes and parties)

{ } \$180.00. when payment is **received by January 31**

{ } \$200.00 when payment is **received by March 31**

{ } \$240.00 when payment is **received after March 31**

Evening Parties with International Folk  
Dancing to Live Music of Da! Mozhem

**CHECK IF** taking Petar Aleksiev's music classes

**Events subtotal:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

FRIDAY	
Afternoon classes	\$40.00
Evening party	\$40.00
SATURDAY	
Morning classes	\$40.00
Afternoon classes	\$40.00
Evening party	\$40.00
SUNDAY	
Morning reviews	\$40.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	

### Meal Registration Prices

(ONLY with pre-registration.)

{ } \$40 Friday Catered Dinner

**LUNCH is on your own**

{ } \$40 Saturday Catered Dinner

Dietary Restriction? \_\_\_\_\_

**Meal subtotal:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Donation (So appreciated!):**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**New member discount <\$40>:**

**Coupon must be presented at door**

<\$ \_\_\_\_\_ >

**TOTAL:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

### HOST HOTEL:

**Holiday Inn Express & Suites Chico**

Ask for "Statewide 2026" rate \$139

Short of funds? For work scholarships, contact  
Memo Keswick at [memoakeswick@gmail.com](mailto:memoakeswick@gmail.com).  
The Federation also has a Scholarship Program.

**To register with this mail-in form:**

**Make checks payable to: FOLK DANCE FEDERATION**

Send form with your check postmarked by deadline to:

Statewide Registrar, 153 Race Street, San Jose, CA 95126

**(Do NOT mail after June 6; pay at door)**

**Online Registration: [statewide.folkdance.com](http://statewide.folkdance.com).**

Masks optional and proof of vaccination requirements will follow CDC, State, and County COVID regulations at the time of the event.

Sponsored by The Folk Dance Federation of California, Inc.

## Ropoțelul

(Bucovina, Romania)

Ropoțelul (roh-poh-TSEH-lool) is a traditional dance from the village of Vama in the Bucovina region of Romania. The name comes from *ropot*, which means “tramp,” “clatter,” or “thundering,” such as the sound of hooves or rain on a roof. *El* is a Romanian diminutive suffix and *ul* is the article “the.” This dance was presented by Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in the summer of 2025.

Music: 4/4 Meter CD: Sonia Dion & Cristian Florescu Romanian Realm Vol. 13, Band 5.  
The CD can be obtained by contacting Sonia Dion at  
sonia\_dion@hotmail.com.

Video: Cristian and Sonia produce their own videos, which can be purchased by contacting  
sonia\_dion@hotmail.com. If you attended Stockton Folk Dance Camp and purchased the  
video package, you will have access to the videos.

Formation: Mixed circle of dancers in a shoulder hold facing center. If a shoulder hold is uncomfortable,  
arms should be down in V-position.

Steps and Styling: Joyful, bouncy, relaxed.

Meas	Meter 4/4	PATTERN
2 meas	INTRODUCTION. No action.	
	I. IN PLACE; TO THE RIGHT AND BACK TO THE LEFT.	
1	Step R in front of L (ct 1); step L in place (ct 2); step R beside L (ct 3); lift L in front (ct 4).	
2	Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk and direction.	
3-4	Repeat meas 1-2.	
5	Sway R to R (ct 1); bounce on R (ct 2); repeat cts 1-2 with opp ftwk and direction (cts 3-4).	
6	Repeat meas 5.	
7	Step R to R (ct 1); step L behind R (ct 2); step R to R (ct 3); step L behind R (ct 4).	
8	Repeat meas 7, cts 1-2 (cts 1-2); step R to R (ct 3); kick L fwd (ct 4).	
9-10	Repeat meas 7-8 with opp ftwk and direction.	
11-12	Repeat meas 5-6 (sways).	
	II. TRAVELING RIGHT.	
1	Step R to R (ct 1); step L beside R (ct 2); step R to R (ct 3); lift L fwd with bent knee (ct 4).	
2	Step L across R (ct 1); lift R behind (ct 2); step R to R (ct 3); step L beside R (ct 4).	
3	Step R to R (ct 1); lift L fwd with bent knee (ct 2); step L across R (ct 3); lift R behind (ct 4).	
4-6	Repeat meas 1-3.	
7	Step R to R (ct 1); step L beside R (ct 2); step R to R (ct 3); lift L fwd with bent knee (ct 4).	
	Note: the same 6-count pattern is done four and a half times; the pattern crosses the measures.	
	III. IN PLACE; TO THE LEFT AND BACK TO THE RIGHT.	
1-12	Repeat Fig I with opp ftwk and direction.	
	IV. TRAVELING LEFT.	
1-7	Repeat Fig II with opp ftwk and direction.	

Sequence: Repeat as set forth above three times, then Fig I, Fig II, Fig III meas 1-6.

## Carlos Carvajal (1931–2025)

Carlos Carvajal, 94 years young, died in August. Carlos was involved in the early years of the San Francisco Bay Area's folk dance community and never lost touch with the ethnic roots of dance. He was known widely as a folk and ballet dancer/choreographer and recognized as one of the leaders of San Francisco Bay Area's dance. Carvajal was born in San Francisco on June 3, 1931, and spent most of his life in the City.

On his father's side, Carlos comes from a Filipino theatrical family. His grandfather was the director and actor of the Compania Carvajal of Spanish Operettas and Zarzuelas, and his grandmother was the Compania's prima donna. His uncle worked as an actor and starred in the first Filipino film in the Spanish language. His father performed as a stage magician and hypnotist, and his aunt became famous, first as an expressive dancer, then later as the first vampire in the new talking movies, later heralded as the Queen of Horror Pictures.

Carlos began his dance career as a teenager, starting with international folk dance. While still in high school, he joined Changs International Folk Dance Group as part of the Group's Exhibition Ensemble. At the age of 19, he became the group's director.

He then joined Madelynne Green's Festival Workshop, where he partnered with Madelynne Green herself. Carlos learned various forms of folk dance during this time, and, in 1954, he was featured on the cover of *Let's Dance*. The image featured Carvajal dancing in Scottish/Highland dance style at a competition in Sonoma, California, from earlier the same year.

Around the same time Carlos was active in folk dance groups, it was suggested that him to try ballet. As a result, he studied at the San Francisco Ballet School and then officially joined the San Francisco Ballet in 1951.

Carlos went on to join the Ballet of the Marquis de Cuevas, Opera of Bremen, Opera of Bordeaux and Ballet Nacional of Venezuela as soloist, principal dancer, and choreographer. He created more than 20 works for the San Francisco Ballet as its ballet master and associate choreographer. He founded San Francisco Dance Spectrum and created over 50 works in 10 years. He also choreographed for the San Francisco Opera, Oakland Ballet Company, and Peninsula Ballet Theatre, among others.

Returning to his folk dance roots, Carlos was named co-Artistic Director for the Ethnic Dance Festival in 2005. He held the role until 2017 and was named Artistic Director Emeritus in 2018. Other honors/grants/awards include ones from the National Endowment for the Arts, the San Francisco Arts Commission, the Critics' Circle and an Isadora Duncan Lifetime Achievement Award.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Memorial**  
**San Francisco**  
**January 17, 2026, at 2 pm**



Changs Performing Group in 1950. Carlos is in the front row, third from the right.



Carlos in his teens.



# A BLAST FROM THE PAST

It was 1954. Folk dancing was young, as was the Folk Dance Federation. Dancers, male and female, young and old, obsessed over having the correct costume(s). Committees and study groups were formed. Seamstresses advertised their services for those lacking a sewing machine, time, skill, or all three. *Let's Dance* printed articles every month about the clothing of different countries and regions, often including photos, sketches, patterns, and additional resources.

## Bodices of Various European Countries

### A—Donaueschingen, Black Forest, Germany:

A laced and flowered brocade bodice, worn with pleated white silk plastron under the lacing, and Halsmantel covering the top of the bodice, edged with velvet ribbon. Protestants, a black edge, Catholics, white. (A Halsmantel is a sort of yoke worn over the shoulders, attached to or worn with an upstanding collar; it opens down the front, and is kept in place by four ribbons which pass from its corners under the arms, where they are tied in a bow.)

### B—Newstadt, Black Forest, Germany:

Here the most of the bodice is of brocaded velvet, the top or yoke is of plain material encrusted with gold drops, sears and oak leaves, embroidered without design, entirely free-hand. The two materials are joined with a scalloped pattern of gold braid. No Halsmantel is worn with this bodice, which fastens with gold coins.

### C—Falster, Denmark:

Also of black velvet, with stiff boning at the edge. It laces with red cord from the inside, the buttons on the outside being purely ornamental. They are fairly large and of silver. Bodices of young girls and brides have a three-inch border of blue wool embroidery in floral design at the top-edge.

### D—Appenzell, Switzerland:

Of black velvet, with unbroken band at the top of the front, laced with black ribbon or cord pulled around large, ornate silver buttons. A narrow pleated plastron of flowered silk is worn under the lacing.

### E—Molten, Tyrol, Austria:

Here the bodice is of brightly hued horizontally striped linen. A piece of shirred black silk is applied to the neck edge. This bodice does not have an opening; it is pulled over the head and fastens to the skirt with snaps.

### F—Rimoc, Hungary:

The bodice of a married woman of Rimoc is made of red or green velvet, it fastens in front with frogs, which may be either of gold or the same color as the bodice. Having a peplum, the bodice of young girls omits the peplum, and the bodice is ornamented with "harrar scrolls," fashioned of colored or gold braid.

### G—Bratislava, Czechoslovakia:

Of red velvet, encrusted with gold braid in front, and fancy floral pattern of colored beads and sequins on the back. It fastens at the waistline with medium sized buckles of gold filigree or granats.

### H—Linz, Upper Austria:

Here the bodice is of black or very dark blue velvet, edged in deep red about one inch wide,

laced with red velvet ribbon. The front has a velvet belt, which is stationary on one side, and buttons on the other. The back has a wreath of oak leaves and acorns embroidered in gold and silver threads.

### I—Nowy Targ, Poland:

Of black velvet, narrowly edged with bright red or orange and laced with red or orange cord. Each side of the front has two rows of varicolored sequins, with flowers embroidered between them. The flowers have bead centers and are outlined with sequins.

### J—Belgrade, Yugoslavia:

Made of black felt-like wool. It fastens at the waist with a very large silver filigree buckle. The neckline is outlined by wide silver braid. The front buttons and center back are heavily em-

broidered with floral designs worked with silver thread.

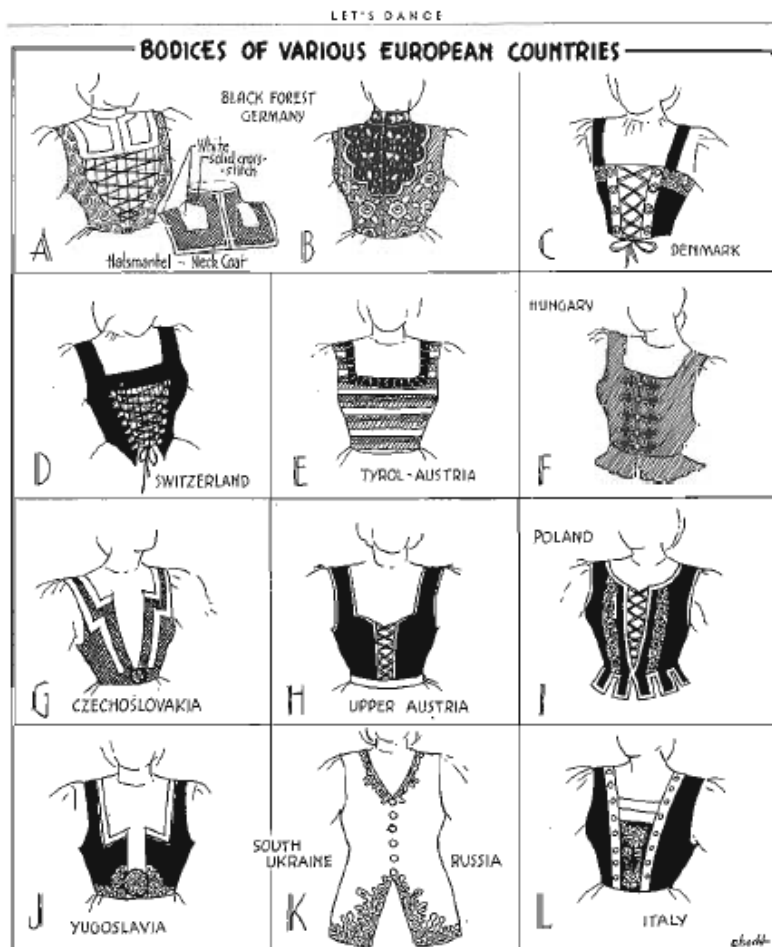
### K—South Ukraine, Russia:

A red velvet bodice, fastened with six self-covered buttons. Neckline, armholes, front corners and bottom of the back are heavily embroidered in fantasy-patterns, worked with gold or silver thread.

### L—Fratquati, Italy:

A vestee-type of bodice of black velvet with bands of fuschin colored silk ribbons. Horizontal ribbon is plain, the vertical ribbons have a row of small silver balls sewn on them. Between the ribbons at the center front is a small panel of black velvet with flowers embroidered in silver thread.

—Research by Liesl Barnett



MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY LIESL BARNETT

APRIL, 1954

FOLK DANCE FEDERATION  
OF CALIFORNIA, INC.  
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Millbrae, California 94030

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Do a loony-goony dance  
'Cross the kitchen floor,  
Put something silly in the world  
That ain't been there before.

~ Shel Silverstein,  
A Light in the Attic



advertisement

# Folk Dance Scene

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

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