

# Let's Dance!

THE MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING **03** FEBRUARY 2025



*Photo by M. Smith.*

*What better way is there to celebrate the new year?*

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

# Let's Dance!

Volume 82, No. 2

FEBRUARY 2025

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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.

**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

San Jose, CA 95126

**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.

Marcia Rosenblatt, Membership

927 Springfield Drive, Millbrae, CA 94030

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.

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

	<u>½ page</u>	<u>full page</u>	
Member clubs	\$50	\$90	<i>All ads are in</i>
All others	\$80	\$120	<b>COLOR</b>

**Mail checks to: Loui Tucker, Editor  
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**WELCOME NEW  
FEDERATION MEMBERS**  
Stela Voyles, San Francisco

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Laura Richardson

My calendar says 2025, and I can hardly wrap my brain around this new year. I read a lot of science fiction in my younger days, and some tales featured dates hovering around this very year, but set in futuristic, unrecognizable worlds of interstellar travel and alien encounters. I think we are, as a species, behind the hoped-for “best case scenario” arc of progress. I am still waiting for my flying car! But I will cut the early sci-fi authors some slack. Predicting the future is never easy.

January is a good time for resolutions and self-reflection. In the Northern European traditions of my ancestors, January was a quiet time by the fireside, mending tools, planning for planting, telling stories, and waiting for spring to bring new life and bustling activity. I carry the tradition forward by spending January reflecting on what I can do better. Competition with others is foolish. The only person we need to compete with is the one in the mirror.

This year I am going to try to be more “present” in each moment. I will look at my phone less; I will listen more; I will speak less; I will try to understand the people around me and what they are going through by really tuning in. I witnessed my own parents in their aging processes, and it seems like time conspires to make it harder for us to see, hear and empathize with others as we age. We become more convinced we “know” things. And we want to share what we know with the people around us. But by thinking about what we want to say *next*, we are not really hearing what someone else is already saying in that moment. The more we *think* we know, the harder it is to *stay curious*, listen, and learn new things. I want to stay “open” as long as I can, soaking up the world around me with childlike curiosity.

Dancers have an advantage because we are ALWAYS learning new steps, new music, new patterns. By stretching into new rhythms, we make our brains a little more flexible, and I think this adds to our creative capacity.

We move through the world seeing connections; feeling the earth beneath our feet; noticing our breathing and our muscles and joints; and not fearing to hold the hand of the person next to us. We are fully engaged in the world in ways that non-dancers cannot grasp. We find balance within ourselves, and within the line or with our dance partners. Dancing in our communities, we develop trust and appreciation for each unique expression. We learn by watching and doing. Dancing is total engagement – mind, body, spirit are all in the flow. I think this is why I feel renewed after dancing, even if I am a sweaty mess. We are “present” in the dance; present in the way I want to try to be in the world this year. More in tune; more alive; more trusting; more open.

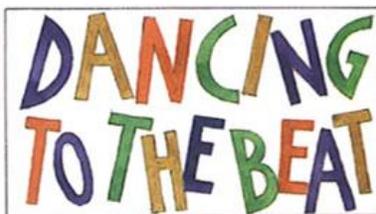
I hope you get to dance a lot this year. As you fill out your 2025 dance calendar with local events like the ones advertised in this magazine, I hope you are as delighted as I am to live in such a vibrant region for folk dancing. I feel lucky to be here; to have time to dance; to have opportunities to dance with you and so many friends.

If you have time, you can pitch in and help with these events as well. One way to help is to REGISTER EARLY. You would not believe how helpful it is to just know roughly how many people are going to attend! It takes many hands and hearts to put on a dance event, and there is always a need for more helpers. Reach out to the organizers; they will be grateful. By helping, you are strengthening the whole dance family.

Here's to another year of dancing with you! Stay healthy and happy and keep moving to the beat!



Laura Richardson. Photo by E. Khuner.





# Jim Gold International Folk Tours 2025

Travel, adventure, folk dance, culture



## Eastern Europe-The Balkans

**ALBANIA, GREECE, MACEDONIA and KOSOVO ext: May 21-June 2-4**

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

**BULGARIA-Koprivshitsa Festival (held every 5 years): July 29-August 11**

Led by Ventsi Milev:: Sofia, Plovdiv, Bansko, Veliko Turnovo, Koprivshitsa

**ROMANIA: Sept 28-Oct 12** Bucharest, Brasov, Sibiu, Cluj, Sighet Marmatiei

**GREECE-GREEK ISLANDS: Oct 4-17**

Led by Lee Otterholt, Maroula Konti, guide: Athens, Nauplia, Sparta, Olympia, Delphi, Meteora, Mycenae, and Epidaurus. **Greek Island Cruise:** Mykonos, Crete, Rhodes, Patmos, Kusadasi

**TURKEY: Oct 17-31**

Led by Lee Otterholt: Istanbul, Ankara, Cappadocia, Pamukkale, Izmir, Kusadasi, Pergamon, Troy, Canakkale, and Bursa



Travel broadens one!

## Western Europe

**SCANDINAVIA: June 10-23**

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

**IRELAND: Aug 2-14**

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 21-30.**

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

**ARGENTINA: Chile ext: Oct 5-15** Buenos Aires, Salta, Mendoza

**BRAZIL: Nov 3-14** Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Iguassu Falls

**ECUADOR: Galapagos ext.: Dec 1-14**



## North America

**WESTERN CANADA: April 10-22** Calgary, Banff, Vancouver

**EASTERN CANADA: June 27-July 9** Montreal, Quebec, Halifax,

New Brunswick, Peggy's Cove (Nova Scotia), Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

## Middle East

**EGYPT: Feb 20-March 2** Cairo, Nile River cruise, Luxor, Aswan

**ISRAEL: March 2-13, November 2-13**

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

**NEW: DELUXE SMALL GROUP TOURS to Croatia and Greece**

**NEW: 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: [www.jimgold.com/](http://www.jimgold.com/) Jim Gold International, Inc.

497 Cumberland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666 U.S.A.

(201) 836-0362 Email: [jimgold@jimgold.co](mailto:jimgold@jimgold.co)

# 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](http://www.folkdance.com) (Community tab).

- JAN. 25** **HUNGARIAN FOLK DANCE AFTERNOON/OPEN PRACTICE.** Hungarian Cultural Center, 35660 Cedar Blvd, Newark. 4-11 pm. Hungarian Folk Concert with Forrás Band 4-5 pm. Kids Dance Circle 5-6 pm. Adult Dance Teaching 6-11 pm. Info: [eszterlanc@eszterlanc.com](mailto:eszterlanc@eszterlanc.com).
- JAN. 25** **DANCING TO LIVE MUSIC BY DA! MOZHEM IN SANTA CRUZ.** Santa Cruz Live Oak Grange, 1900 17th Avenue. Doors open 6:30. Music 7-9-ish. \$15 (sliding scale). Sponsored by the Cabrillo Folk Dancers. Info: [rothdance@hotmail.com](mailto:rothdance@hotmail.com).
- JAN. 31** **STOCKTON FOLK DANCE WINTER WEEKEND.** Via Zoom. 20+ hours of dance classes, presentations, live music, video hours, and events. 12+ hours of dance parties. Puzzles, videos, and more. Info: [stocktonfolkdancecamp.org/winter-weekend](http://stocktonfolkdancecamp.org/winter-weekend).
- FEB. 8** **FESTIVAL OF THE OAKS.** Live Oak Recreation Center, 1301 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley. 9 am-5 pm. Morning workshop with Liina Teose; on-site lunch; afternoon dance party. All-day \$35, or pay for each event. Info: [rg94610@gmail.com](mailto:rg94610@gmail.com). [See ad on p. 9.](#)
- FEB. 8** **FEDERATION BOARD MEETING.** A General Assembly meeting of the Folk Dance Federation will take place during the lunch break at the Festival of the Oaks. Noon-1 pm. Anyone can attend this meeting, and your lunch will be paid for by the Federation.
- FEB. 9** **PENINSULA COUNCIL FOLK DANCE PARTY.** St. Bede's Church Hall, 2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park. 3:30-6:30 pm. \$10. Send requests to [pfdcparty@gmail.com](mailto:pfdcparty@gmail.com) along with any questions.
- FEB. 14** **DA! MOZHEM AT BERKELEY FOLK DANCERS.** Live Oak Recreation Center, 1301 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley. 7:30-9:30 pm.
- FEB. 15** **ANNUAL LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL.** Cerritos Senior Center, 12340 South Street, Cerritos. 1-5:30 pm. \$15. Workshop teachers are master instructors Lee Otterholt and Rebecca Tsai. This is the festival's 13th year!
- FEB. 15-16** **NIRKODA ROMANI.** Romanian dance workshop with Sonia Dion and Cristian Florescu and Israeli dance with Aaron Alpert. Temple Etz Chayim, 4161 Alma Street, Palo Alto. Same schedule on Saturday and Sunday: Workshop 2-5:30 pm, dance party 7:30-11 pm. Pre-register for the entire weekend for \$100 (\$35 for single events) or \$110 at the door (\$40 for single events). Registration: [nirkoda.com/romani](http://nirkoda.com/romani). Info: [aaron@nirkoda.com](mailto:aaron@nirkoda.com). [See ad on p. 26.](#)
- FEB. 22** **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.
- FEB. 28** **CHANGS FAMILY NIGHT!** Miraloma Park Clubhouse, 350 O'Shaughnessy Blvd., San Francisco. 7-8 pm. It's an hour of fun dance activities to music from around the world followed by two hours of international folk dances from our club's repertoire. Adults get in for free if they bring a child, and kids are always free.
- FEB. 28** **LAGUNA FOLK DANC FESTIVAL 2025.** Laguna Woods Clubhouse 2, 24112 Moulton Parkway, Laguna Woods. Teachers: Maurits and Tineke van Geel. [See ad on p. 22.](#)

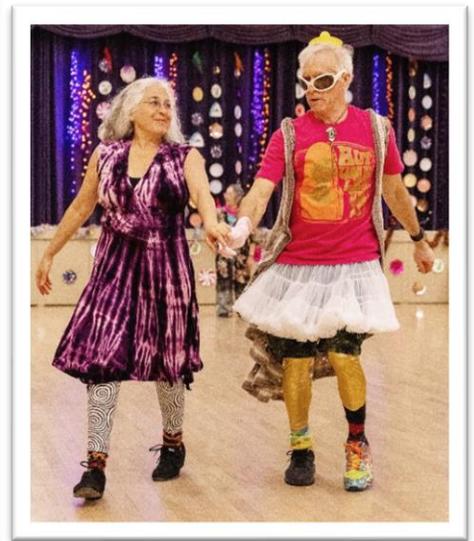
# THE FAMILY PHOTO ALBUM



Alicia LaFetra and MC Denise Heenan enjoyed the Palomanians Pie Party in December. *Photo by L. Tucker.*



Arlene Imagawa and Susan Gregory dressed appropriately for the Saratoga Folk Dancers' Clash Party in December. *Photo by L. Tucker.*



It was Tom Williard, dancing with Lisa Bell, who took home the prize for the most clashing apparel. *Photo by C. Dickey.*



Café Simcha Israeli Dance Club in Kensington celebrated Hanukkah with a dance party. *Photo by E. Khuner.*



Ulrike Narins, in her last hours as Federation President, danced with her son, Lothar, at the Moveable Feet Club's New Year's Eve Fundraiser for Second Harvest Food Bank. See story on p. 7. *Photo by L. Tucker.*



The Monterey Folk Dancers celebrated the end of the year at a party in December. Read about their good news on p. 14. *Photo by Q. Jongejan.*

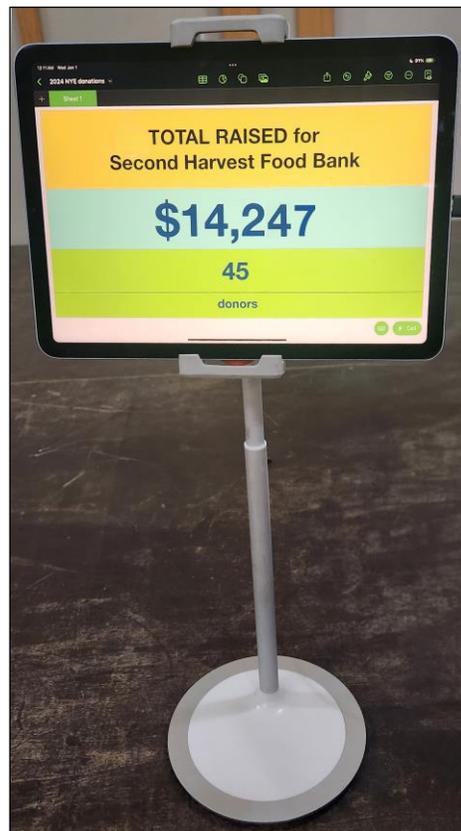
# Moveable Feet Club Raises over \$14,000 for Second Harvest Food Bank

Lucy Chang launched a folk dance fundraiser for her favorite charity, Second Harvest of Silicon Valley, in 2017. In 2018, she raised \$1,080 (and 302 cans of food). That grew to \$2,335 (and about 260 cans of food) in late 2019, three months before her death from cancer.

Her Moveable Feet Club carries on the tradition by combining the fundraiser with their annual New Year's Eve Party that Lucy originally co-hosted with Loui Tucker that Loui now emcees on her own.

The fundraising has exceeded Lucy's wildest dreams: at the October 2020 Zoom event, \$9,457 was raised. At the 2021-22 party \$11,212 was raised; \$10,862 was raised at the 2022-23 party; and at the 2023-24 party, the amount was \$12,433. This year the total was over \$14,000 from 45 donors!

The party itself has remained a popular way to bring in the new year for local folk dancers. It starts with a potluck dinner at 7 pm. Dancing begins around 8 pm and dancers continue to arrive until the hall is comfortably full. At midnight there is the traditional singing of "Auld Lang Syne," confetti streamers, and hugs all around.



Left, Marina Troost and Douce Massenkoff singing "Auld Lang Syne;" center, Aaron Alpert adorned with confetti streamers; right, Greta Chang dancing with Richard Graham. *Photos by L. Tucker.*

# FROM THE EDITOR

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

The current feature is called News From Around the Bay and Beyond, but in past years it was Tell It to Danny, Council Clips, or Club Clips. Instead of What's Up Down South, Chatter from the South or Echoes From the Southland carried news from southern California. In addition to news of clubs forming, events planned, beginners' classes scheduled, and festivals reviewed, there was always news about the folk dancers themselves. It was rare that notice of the engagement or marriage of folk dancers didn't appear.



As I started reviewing issues from the 1960s, the names of dancers who are still with us began to appear, as you will see below.

October 1944: "It might be news to newer members of the Federation to know that Frances Glass was Frances Farnell back in 1942. At that time she was the Federation's first secretary when Buzz Glass was the first president. Their marriage resulted from the happy association."

March 1951: Natalie Tanas and Dean Linscott of International Dance Circle were married last month. **Note**: This is the same Dean Linscott who later married Nancy (see November 1955 below). They later made their way north and started the Kopachka Dancers in Marin County in the mid-1960s.

August 1953: Paul Pritchard and Ruby Anderson were married. There was a reception afterwards for 150 folk dancers, dancing 8-11 pm.

September 1955: The Gateswingers, the second oldest club (Changs is the oldest), was organized in 1940. Many Federation leaders are among its members: Dan McDonald, Walter Grothe, Buzz Glass, Vera Holleufer, and Jack McKay. At least 12 couples have met and married while dancing at the club.

November 1955: Dean Linscott married Nancy Carmody, both members of the Gandy Dancers of San Diego.

November 1957: Prospects have been very good in Sacramento for single girls. My advice: "Join a Folk Dance Club."

January 1960: Cupid has been busy in the teenaged clubs. Bruce Mitchell is engaged to Virginia Bangert (Camellia Festival queen this year); Nancy Squires and Dave Smith announced their engagement; and Richard Glass and Judy Williams were married. **Note**: Virginia (Ginny) was Bruce's first wife. Bruce was the Director of Stockton Folk Dance Camp for 25 years.

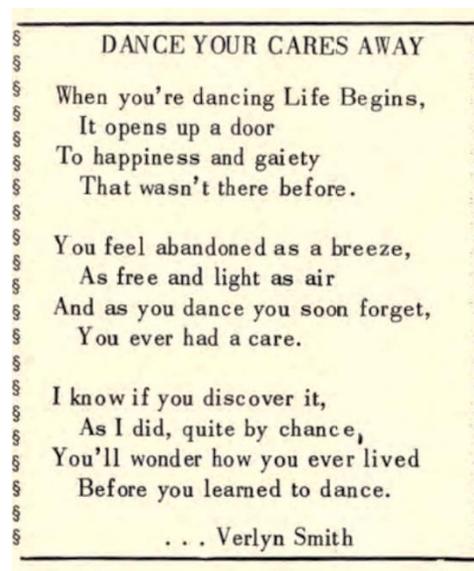
June 1961: Westwood Co-op had two weddings, including Dick Oakes and Patti Wentworth in April (and Dick taught that night). **Note**: Dick now lives in Hawaii and manages the Folk Dance Federation South's website.

May 1962: Cookie Mitchell and Gordon Deeg of Sacramento are engaged to be married. The Kalico Kutters group in Stockton has watched the Mitchell children group up in folk dancing. **Note**: This was the first marriage for both of them. Cookie later married John Brakebill and is now married to Ruth Hall; Gordon is now married to Kamrin MacKnight.

June 1962: Patti and Dick Oakes hosted an after-party in their apartment complete with wall-to-wall people and Hambo-ing in the bedroom (the logical place, isn't it?). It was brought to a reluctant halt by a call from the landlord, who is not a folk dancer and just didn't know any better.

November 1963: Elizabeth Lowe became the bride of Ronald Bueno in a garden wedding at the home of her parents. **Note**: Ron and Liz Bueno were in the East Bay at the time of this announcement. They later moved to the Peninsula and were active in the Palomanians. They still appear occasionally at Peninsula and Palomanian events.

December 1963: An Armenian wedding was attended by local folk dancers. Tommy Bozigian led many of the lines during the dancing at the reception. Two other folk dancers married in November. **Note**: That is the same Tom Bozigian who became a master teacher of Armenian dance.



February 1962

Some interesting advertisements from back issues appear on p. 27.

## 2025 Festival of the Oaks Institute Instructor Liina Teose

# 76<sup>th</sup> Annual International Folk Dance Festival of the Oaks



Liina Teose

### DATE AND LOCATION

**Saturday, February 8, 2025**

**Live Oak Park**  
1301 Shattuck Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94709



*No partner needed*

Registration begins at 9:00 a.m.

**Institute with Liina Teose**  
9:30 - noon – \$20.00

**Afternoon Dance Party**  
**International Folk Dancing**  
*Dances from around the world,*  
*Institute Reviews & contras*  
Exhibition Presentation  
1:00 - 5:00 p.m. – \$20.00

**All day – Institutes & Folk Dance Party**  
\$35.00

**Hot lunch**  
Noon - 1:00 p.m. – \$15.00

**Federation Membership meeting**  
*Folk Dance Federation of California will*  
*provide lunch for members attending.*  
Noon - 1:00 p.m.

**Pre-owned folk dance costume sale**  
*Bring items to donate.*  
12:30 – 4:30

*Free refreshments all afternoon*

**Register and pay in advance at:**  
<https://tinyurl.com/festivalofoaks>

**To send dance requests for the afternoon party, or for more info, email:**  
[rg94610@gmail.com](mailto:rg94610@gmail.com)

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

Liina was born in Portland, Oregon. At two years of age, she made her debut as a folk dancer in Tulehoidjad (“Torch Bearers”), the Portland Estonian folk dance troupe led by her mother. Her mother was born in Estonia and fled in 1944 when the Soviet Union occupied Estonia; she learned Estonian folk dances in displaced persons camps in Germany, where she lived for five years before emigrating to the United States.

In 1985, Liina took over leading Tulehoidjad and has been its director for the past 39 years. Some members of Tulehoidjad are descendants of the original dancers who danced when the troupe was founded in 1950. As such, the troupe is truly bearing the torch of Estonian dance, culture and traditions.

Liina and Tulehoidjad have performed at all of the West Coast Estonian Days, many festivals, and mass folk dance performances in Estonia, as well as countless local and regional festivals. Liina has been a guest artist at many multicultural programs in Portland, teaching Estonian dances to participants.

In 1999, she was awarded the Ullo Toomi Award for her work bringing

folk dance troupes from Estonia to Portland, showcasing Estonia and Estonian folk dance in the Portland Rose Festival, as well as organizing Estonian folk dance troupes. Liina is the only folk dance director living and teaching outside of Estonia to receive this award. In 2012, Liina was awarded the Estonian Foreign Minister’s Certificate of Recognition for her long-term commitment to promoting Estonian culture as well as teaching and introducing Estonian folk dance.

Liina taught Estonian folk dances as a member of the faculty at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 2024. She has been playing the accordion since the age of 12 and plays at all Tulehoidjad rehearsals and performances as well as in several international folk dance bands in Portland. Liina will be bringing her accordion and playing it for the workshop at the Festival of the Oaks.

# SPEAKING OF DANCING

by Gigi Jensen

## Resolution Is Not a Dirty Word

My musings for this month's piece started innocently enough with asking various dance friends what their dance goals are for 2025. Some folks said that they don't make goals. One explained she's retired from dancing since she has had too many injuries. She was a professional dancer so that was a big deal.

Others offered:

### Adony Beniares

- Continue being part of the Global Dance Community
- Dance at local clubs we don't regularly attend once every other month

### Stacy Rose

- Learn at least half of the dances on my "Dances to Learn" list
- Attend as many in-person dances locally that I can

### Ellie Wiener

- Dedicate more time to folk dance organizations I support
- Attend more camps and festivals
- Do more teaching

### Gigi Jensen (me)

- See more dance in person
- Revise and add to my dance YouTube playlists
- Write out dance maps for all my Dancing with Friends dances
- Improve my strength and posture.



Do you set goals for your dancing? You can be like the bobbing and twirling leaf that floats along on the river of dance and go where it takes you. That's a lot of fun. Another possibility is to think about what you dream of doing and make some plans to bring that to fruition.

Looking for inspiration? Go to where dancing happens. A theater is one place. Another is at a party to just sit and watch. Dance movies and videos are another. EVERY time I watch Gene Kelly dance to "Singing in the Rain," I'm reminded to dance with joy. I watch Ginger Rogers dance with Fred Astaire and ask myself, "How is she so limber, and how can I float like that?" I like to watch K-pop dancers strut their stuff, so sometimes I put on a video and do my own crazy version when no one is at home.

If you want to make your movements more harmonious with the music and with the people you're dancing with, practice. Find a friend or two and practice together. If you have trouble with remembering a dance, make a note with the sequence written in big letters, tape it to the wall, put the music on, and dance it until you get bored enough to make grocery lists in your head. My dance mentor says, "Dance it until you can't get it wrong." Don't remember how a particular dance goes? These websites have the dance notes; some have links to videos:

[folkdancemusings.blogspot.com](http://folkdancemusings.blogspot.com) – Andrew Carnie's extensive dance resource

[stocktonfolkdancecamp.org/past-dances/](http://stocktonfolkdancecamp.org/past-dances/) – Dances taught at Stockton Folk Dance Camp

[folkdance.com/resources/dance-notes/](http://folkdance.com/resources/dance-notes/) – Folk Dance Federation of California

If you want to attend an intensive dance experience such as a folk dance camp or on a dance trip, get in as good shape as your circumstances allow. I know from experience that if I've signed up for a week of dance classes, parties, and other activities but am too tired by the second day, I'm not going to get my dance dreams realized. You also might get hurt trying to do more than you should. Whatever it takes for you to dance more and move better, do it. This is not medical advice, though. Ask your doctor for that.

The great thing about setting goals is that you can do it any time you want. Don't wait for January 1st. Don't wait until your next birthday reminds you that you're getting older. Don't wait. May we all have a happy new dance year, no matter when it starts!

I love talking about dance. If you do too, drop me a hello at [gigi@tangoandmoredance.com](mailto:gigi@tangoandmoredance.com).

# FEDERATION NEWS



## Federation General Assembly

The officers of the Folk Dance Federation Northern California cordially invite you to attend a **General Assembly** meeting on **Saturday, February 8**, at the Festival of the Oaks in Berkeley. For more information about the festival, visit [folkdance.com/event/festofaoks-25](http://folkdance.com/event/festofaoks-25).

**The meeting will take place during the lunch break at the festival.** See the festival registration form for details.

## LOOKING FOR A STATEWIDE 2026 COMMITTEE

The **Statewide Committee** will be in charge of organizing the Statewide Festival in May 2026. Yes, that's over a year away, but halls appropriate for dancing with nearby hotels and restaurants often need to be booked far in advance. Who will host this time?

**2010** Sonoma  
**2012** Campbell/San Jose  
**2014** Redding  
**2016** Berkeley

**2018** Sacramento  
**2022** Petaluma  
**2024** Newark

Please contact Federation President Laura Richardson at [president@folkdance.com](mailto:president@folkdance.com) if you or your club is interested in being part of this important project.

## THE FEDERATION ARCHIVES HAVE BEEN MOVED



Kevin Greek, Joe Croco, and Laura Douglass in the spacious new storage unit. *Photo by L. Richardson.*

Kevin Greek, in addition to being the manager of the Federation's website, is the head of the Archives Committee. Last fall he did some research and found a storage facility that was (a) comparable in cost to and (b) twice as large as the one we were using to store all the materials in the Federation's archives. In late December, Kevin, Joe Croco, Laura Douglass, and Laura Richardson packed all those boxes and moved them to the new location, and then organized it all onto new shelving. Take a look!

What do we have in the archives? Costumed dolls, a complete collection of the back issues of *Let's Dance!* magazine, books on folk dance and folk craft topics, records and CDs, historic photographs, calendars, and scrapbooks, syllabi and dance notes, paintings, the dress written about in the January issue, and much more. If you are interested in browsing the collection, contact Kevin as [kevingreek0@gmail.com](mailto:kevingreek0@gmail.com).



A portable record player in a colorful case!

## ANDY KACSMAR – 1948-2024

Andy Kacsma was very active in the folk dance community in the Palo Alto area in his early years, particularly with groups led by Marcel Vinokur. He was instrumental in helping migrate Marcel's huge music collection from records to mini-discs.

He began attending Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 1989 and was there every year until 2007. Much of that time he was in charge of the complex sound system used by the musicians and teachers.

For many years Andy also attended the EEFC's Balkan Camp, where he often provided much of the sound equipment for the dance hall and kafana and assisted the dance teachers with the equipment during their classes. In recent years, he was highly involved in Kolo Koalition in Sacramento.

He and Glynis Hawley met at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 1996 and were married in 2005. He worked at Stanford InfoLab while he was living in Mountain View and moved to Roseville when he retired.



Andy with Glynis in 2007. *Photo by C. Feige.*

## MARIAN GAULT – 1920-2024

Marian Gault would have been 105 years old this April. She has spent the bulk of those years dancing, primarily folk dancing.

Marian was born in Idaho and lived there and in Hawaii and Yosemite National Park before coming to the San Francisco Bay Area. She taught in the public schools in the South Bay, mostly at the junior high level.

Both Marian and her husband Ned began dancing as ballroom dancers. Marian met Ned in an adult education class taught by Ned's parents. In 1958, Ned's parents decided to stop teaching and Marian and Ned took over an advanced class of over 100 dancers. They married in 1962, and local dance groups celebrated with them at a huge party.

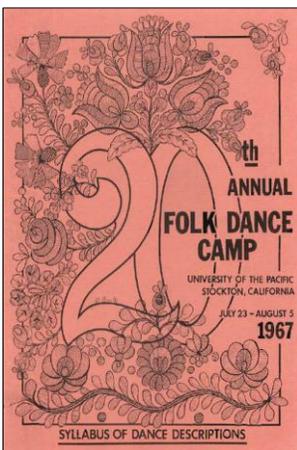
Ned became president of the Folk Dance Federation of California (1964-66). Marian and Ned both served in many capacities for the Folk Dance Federation and have been members since the late 1950s.

They started teaching at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 1963 and remained on the teaching faculty for 28 years, first teaching tangos and later teaching techniques for folk dance classes and the basic repertoire classes. Marian, as an artist and calligrapher, designed the syllabus covers for 25 years and did the artwork for publicity. Ned and Marian taught a weekly folk dance class in Santa Clara until the COVID shutdown.

Ned and Marian formed Ensemble International in 1966, a performing folk dance group which they directed for 37 years. It was a nonprofit organization for which Marian did all the correspondence, bookkeeping, reports, and grant writing, as well as designing and making many of the folk costumes worn by the dancers. She scheduled rehearsals and danced in all the performances.



Marian shortly before her 100th birthday.



Syllabus cover designed by Marian.



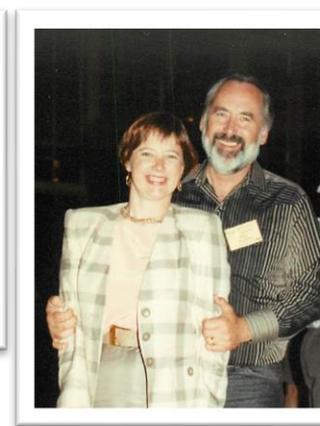
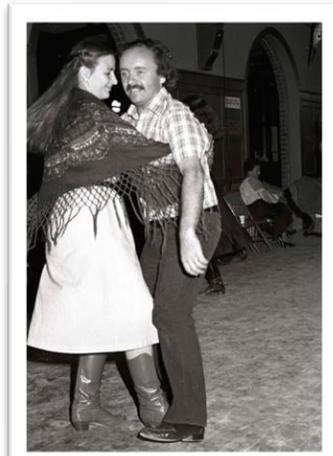
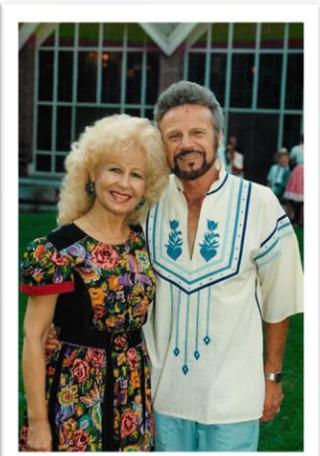
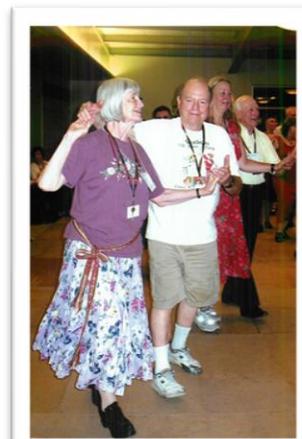
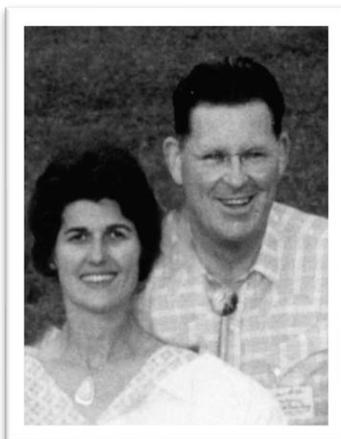
## Asako Oshiro 1952-2025

We heard shortly before going to press that Beryl "Asako" Oshiro passed away on January 3 in Santa Monica, California. Born in Hawaii, she held degrees in Psychology and Dance Therapy and was a Cardiac Rehabilitation Specialist. She performed with the Aman International Folk Ensemble of Los Angeles and was a wonderful folk dance teacher and friend. We all miss her and her smile.

## A DIFFERENT KIND OF PHOTO CONTEST

You are welcome to try to identify all of the couples below by yourself, but this contest might require some teamwork. One possibility would be to enlist the support of members of your local dance club – BFD, Palomanians, Changs, Turlock Village Dancers, etc., and enter the contest as a club. Another possibility would be to form an informal group of dancers that you believe might have sufficient knowledge. In any event, the prize is **doubled to \$50 for the FIRST correct answer** and you can decide how to use/split your prize.

You must identify all the couples in the photos below. Spelling need not be precise, but it has to be close enough for me to know that you recognize the people shown. Good luck!



Answers will appear in the next issue.

# NEWS FROM AROUND THE BAY...

## MONTEREY FOLK DANCERS – Marguerite Fishman

**Our group really ended 2024 on a high note.** After paying rent for both January and February 2025, we had enough money left over to make a nice donation to the church where we dance to thank them for their ongoing support, *and* splurge on pizza for our Holiday Dance party. A good time was had by all.

Our group is stable and happy. We hope to find ways to bring a few more dancers into our group in the coming months.



Happy Holidays from the Monterey Folk Dancers!  
*Photo by Y. Ha.*

## NORTH BAY – Carol Friedman

Our winter/spring session in Petaluma at Hermann Sons Hall started up in the new year on January 6 and runs through May 20 every Monday. We'll be dancing to old and new favorites, including requests.

I'm bringing back Sandy's Čačak plus a couple of dances I saw on the most recent Global Folk Dance Party, including Zaplanski Čačak, and Kiskanasztánc as well as Čoček Za Merak.

It turns out that there's a YouTube video online of me teaching Čoček Za Merak at the 2015 Festival of the Oaks. I didn't even have this music in my iPod; it must have been from the time I was using CDs, which are now long gone. Fortunately, Steve Ayala was able to extract the music from the video.

Several national holidays are scheduled on Mondays during 2025, but at our last class of 2024 we took a vote, and **it was unanimous – no one wanted to miss a week of dancing.**

## RAZZMATAZZ – Marilyn Smith

We had our 'Tis the Season Holiday folk dance party on Saturday, December 14 at Monroe Hall in Santa Rosa. The hall was filled with folk dancers from our current classes to folk dancers who have danced with us over the past five decades. It is always a wonderful reunion party. This year we had several children come and we enjoyed doing the Israeli dance Yesh Lanu Tayish with them.

As always, I read "Twas the Night Before Christmas" with children sitting at my feet. Ruthie Bitton then sang three Hanukah songs accompanied by Ellen Watson on viola.

The rest of the evening we danced to all live music, first with a choral set by Gradina, our local Balkan singing group. Their set included, among others, the beautiful song Heyaoli plus perennial favorites Čobankat, Tervelska Ručenica, Rumelaj, Karagouna, and Kostursko, as well as pravos, lesnotos and a čoček. Yabulka played a set of Bulgarian dances including Sadi Moma, Četvorno, a Thracian Ručenica, Pandalaš, Dospatsko, Paiduško, a Kopanica and a pravo. This year they were joined by Andrew Toplarski, who sang with Jim Avera on several songs.

The evening concluded with both groups joining together to sing Devojko Mari Hubava as dancers circled around them.

**Spring classes will begin on Tuesday, February 4.**



Gradina sang for the dancing. *Photo by E. Torgerson.*

# ... AND BEYOND

## BERKELEY FOLK DANCERS – Carol Hayden

We hope you all plan to attend the **Festival of the Oaks on February 8** at Live Oak Community Center in Berkeley. See the flyer on p. 9 for all the information. The workshop in the morning features Estonian dance specialist Liina Teose. The Federation is having their General Assembly meeting during the lunch break, so it's easy to attend. Dancing continues in the afternoon.

**BFD has been growing recently, and the total membership is now higher than it was before the COVID shutdown!**

Back in mid-January, Berkeley Folk Dancers welcomed its newest members at their annual Birthday Ball. Perhaps there will be a photo or two in the next issue of *Let's Dance!*

## PENINSULA FOLK DANCE COUNCIL – Clem Dickey

Please note that the Council's **usual second Saturday party has moved to Sunday, February 9**, so everyone can attend the Festival of the Oaks (and the Federation General Assembly) in Berkeley on Saturday.

Congratulations to the Moveable Feet Club, which **raised over \$14,000** at their New Year's Eve Fundraiser for Second Harvest Food Bank. See p. 7.

The year 2024 was the first year the Palomanians **managed the class using a rotating schedule of eight teachers**, plus a few others as guest stars. They have been happy with the results and will continue with that process.

The Palomanians recently learned three Greek dances that **Lon and Hollis Radin brought back from a tour of Greece** this past fall: Lon introduced Xesyrtos, and Hollis taught Pirgousikos Horo, which features very short lines of three dancers or four dancers, and Syrtos Serifos, a Greek couple dance. Clem Dickey covered Castle Schottische Mixer (a Castle Schottische variation by Joan Walton) and Kotlensko Horo.

The Hungarian/Transylvanian folk dance class resumed on Monday, January 6 after a hiatus while Todd Wagner was in Hungary. The class has voted to learn dances from the Transylvanian village of Vajdaszentivány for the Winter Quarter. **This is the third most popular dance in Hungary.** Women need to bring a sturdy scarf.

**The Saratoga Folk Dancers ended the year with a clash-themed party.** Tom Williard won a \$25 gift certificate for his exceptional fashion nonsense. The photos were eye-popping!

The group is taking a crack at learning some **basic Salsa Rueda calls** this quarter, along with the usual variety of international folk dances, including Malki Mome taught by Lon Radin. Dick Rawson has stepped up to call a contra several times in the past months.

**If you get this issue before Saturday, January 25**, there are **two good opportunities to dance to live music** in the Peninsula/South Bay:

There is a **táncház with live music at the Hungarian Cultural Center**, 35660 Cedar Boulevard in Newark. Eszterlanc is hosting this event. There will be instruction of Hungarian circle dances, so you don't have to already know the dances to participate.

The Cabrillo Folk Dancers in Santa Cruz are **hosting Da! Mozhem for an evening of live music** at the Santa Cruz Live Oak Grange, 1900 17th Avenue. Doors open at 6:30.

**SAN FRANCISCO GROUPS – Linda Milhoan**  
**Chang loves Family Night!** This month it's on **February 28**. Adults get in for free if they bring a child and kids are always free. It's an hour of fun dance activities to music from around the world followed by two hours of international folk dances from our club's repertoire.



Clashing Saratoga Folk Dancers, from left, Bill White, Jo Gent, and Audene Merrilees.

## MEET YOUR EDITOR

**PREFACE:** During the many decades that *Let's Dance!* magazine has been published, articles have appeared about folk dance leaders and teachers. Some were obituaries written after the leader died; some were written while they were still alive. Some were in the form of interviews, while others were biographical in nature. These articles appeared under various headings: "People Worth Knowing," "An Interview with...," "Folk Dancers Lost and Found," "Teacher of the Month," and "Folk Dancers We Should Remember." Most of them were scanned and are posted on folkdance.com, Community tab, Dance Leaders.

Several times in the past, I have written From The Editor columns asking readers to consider submitting an article about their own teacher leaders. I even supplied a list of people I thought merited such an article, but few of the pieces have ever appeared. Two years ago, Craig Blackstone took me up on my request, but he wanted the subject of the article to be me. Being the editor and not wanting additional time in the spotlight, I resisted. He insisted. After much cajoling, I answered his written interview questions. He turned it into an article and submitted it. I said I would print it only if there was room in an upcoming issue. And, of course, I never seemed to have room.

Craig recently boxed me into a corner. He said he had two interesting pieces for *Let's Dance!* for me: (1) the story of his first public dance performance during a 49ers half-time show; and (2) a dance bio of Lothar Narins. He said he would only submit them after I printed the piece about me. Sigh.

---

by Craig Blackstone

Loui Tucker was born in North Carolina in 1950. She grew up in Arizona and arrived in San Jose in 1971 in search of a more liberal political environment and to start a teaching position.

She started folk dancing in 1972 in Kathy Kerr's class in downtown San Jose (where she met Alan Rothchild and John Nicoara, who would also become Bay Area folk dance teachers). She soon discovered folk dancing at San Jose State University Women's Gym and then Marcel Vinokur's classes in Menlo Park. The biggest influence on her dance life was Marcel, who was the principal teacher for many of the dancers on the Peninsula who also eventually became teachers.

Loui started teaching dance with an after-school dance class for the students at the junior high school where she worked. In the spring of 1980, she started the Saratoga Folk Dancers, the same group that still meets on Thursdays almost 45 years later. In 1981, she was approached by the principal of the local synagogue to teach a few dances to teenagers attending an after-school Jewish education program. That led to an Israeli dance class for adults which started with eight women and has grown to be among the largest Israeli dance classes outside Israel. In 2008, she was approached by a group of Israelis who wanted a special session on just couple dances, and that class still meets twice a month. Finally, in 2015, she started an Israeli dance class for beginners at her local synagogue, which also meets twice a month. Loui has taught at several dance camps, including Mainwoods, Camp Hess Kramer, New Mexico Dance Camp, BFD's Monte Toyon retreat, Statewide, and Stockton Folk Dance Camp.

She became a member for the Folk Dance Federation in the 1990s. In the early 2000s, she attended a Board meeting held during the Heritage Festival and remembers looking at the budget report and thinking "They have so much money! Why aren't they spending it on advertising and promotion and teacher training and outreach and...." It was time to get involved! In 2008 she became vice president when Bill Lidicker was Federation President. She has since served in all four officer positions and took over as editor of *Let's Dance!* when Gary Anderson decided to retire at the end of 2016.

Loui started attending Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 1993, taught Israeli dance there in 2003 and 2005, and served on the Stockton Board 2010-2021. She has been a member of the National Folk Organization since 2005 and is currently involved with the NFO's Mentoring Project. She managed the websites for the Federation, Stockton Camp, and the NFO for several years.





Loui started out as a folk dance generalist but in the 1980s began to specialize in Israeli dance. She says, “I’m glad I have the opportunity to dance both types of dance regularly. It feels sometimes that Israeli and international music and dance stimulate different parts of my brain. I need them both to make me feel properly aligned and connected.”

She says that what attracts her most to international folk dance are the variety of music and the social connections associated with it. She likens it to a “smorgasbord, a huge musical banquet table with so many different instruments, rhythms, vocal interpretation, energy levels...” She adds, “My dance friends are my closest and oldest friends. My day-to-day life revolves around the people I know and work with in the dance community.”

Loui is well known for her photography of dancers and dancing. She is rarely seen at a dance event without her camera in her hand. She avoids being in photos herself, so there are only a few available to accompany this article.

She is also known for dancing the lead part in couple dances, and she was asked how this came about. “For the first several years after I started my own classes, I taught only non-partner dances because I didn’t have very many dancers and only a few men. When I first began teaching couple dances, I decided that it was not fair for me to pick one of the few men in attendance to use as my partner because that meant *two* women would not have a male partner. If I danced with another woman, both of them could dance; one woman danced with me and one danced with the now-available man. Then it just became my policy, my system, my way of teaching. I wanted to model for other women that it was okay to dance the man’s part. The bonus? I never lack for a dance partner.”



Loui with her wife, Sabine.

Her goals for the future? “I said when I became president of the Folk Dance Federation that my goal was to ensure that folk dancing did not die on my watch. That’s still my goal, the reason I continue to teach dance classes, and the reason I continue to produce *Let’s Dance!* magazine.”

*Stockton*  
**FOLK DANCE CAMP**  
 JULY 21 - 27 & JULY 28 - AUG. 2, 2025  
 CLASSICS - SPANISH - ROMANIAN - SERBIAN - BASQUE - POLISH - CONTRAS

ED GABRIEL CRISTIAN SONIA BATA ROO RICHARD STACY

[WWW.FOLKDANCECAMP.ORG](http://WWW.FOLKDANCECAMP.ORG)

## CAUCASUS SPECIAL 2025 - "We would have loved to stay longer"

**GEORGIA August 14-27 & ARMENIA August 26-September 11**  
with Tineke & Maurits van Geel



Many travelers shared their excitement about the beauty and culture of the Caucasus. Destinations that have not yet been ruined by mass tourism, although they do see an increase in visitors. Both tours can be booked individually or as a whole. You see the highlights of the countries, but also the hidden gems. Visit our website. [www.tinekevangeel.nl](http://www.tinekevangeel.nl) Both tours are also suitable for non-dancers.

**Folk dancing  
is friendship  
set to music!** 

Kviffert Swedish Folkdance Ensemble

You can't get THAT bumpersticker any longer...

but you can get THIS one:

**International  
Folk  
Dancers**  **Dancers  
Without  
Borders**

The *Dancers Without Borders* bumper sticker is **FREE** as long as you commit to putting it on a vehicle. It is designed to be incidental advertising. Putting it on your refrigerator or in a file folder won't allow that to happen. If someone notices the bumper sticker on your car in a parking lot, for example, and asks about it, you have an opportunity to bring another lucky person into our wonderful community.

Send an email to Loui at [loui@loutucker.com](mailto:loui@loutucker.com) and she will mail you as many bumper stickers as you'd like. Ask for several so you can share them with other dancers in your group.



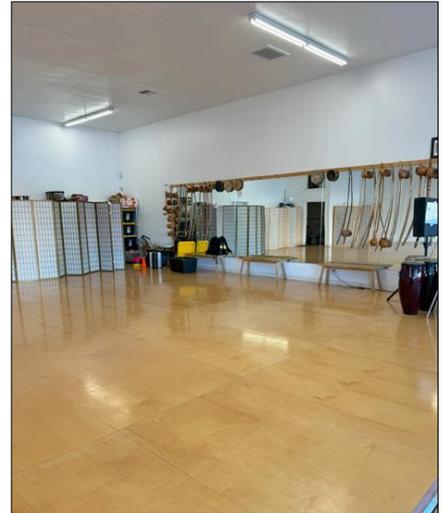
## A DREAM COMING TRUE

by Janetta Redzic

I heard about the Folk Dance Federation and its Promotion Fund at the Kolo Festival in November. I was so excited because it meant that a dream I had might actually come true. I quickly joined the Federation and applied for a grant – and I got it!

**I am thrilled to announce the launch of the Balkan Folk Ensemble: Čardak, with our first rehearsal scheduled for August 2025.** The generous grant will be used primarily for rent of the rehearsal space (photo below).

This vibrant new dance ensemble is dedicated to reviving, celebrating, and preserving the rich songs and dances of former Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Turkey. As a performing



group, Čardak aims to share the beauty of Balkan culture with communities across the Bay Area and beyond in its most authentic form. **Rehearsals will be held every Sunday in Hayward, California starting August 24.** We invite dancers, enthusiasts, and supporters to join us on this exciting journey.

**Why wait until August?** We need to do some additional fundraising and raise awareness of our mission. **Mark your calendars for April 5**, when we'll host a special promotional event. Come dance with us, savor homemade Balkan cuisine, and help us unite the Bay Area's Balkan communities while keeping these cherished traditions alive. Together, let's celebrate and preserve the vibrant culture of the Balkans – one step at a time! Please mark your calendar; updates on the location and time will be coming soon.

What began as a dream is now coming to life!

## SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE

As we're starting a new year, the Federation Scholarship Committee would like to remind everyone that we have funds available to help dancers attend folk dance workshops and camps that they might not otherwise be able to afford. Although most scholarships have been used for **Stockton Folk Dance Camp** ([folkdancecamp.org](http://folkdancecamp.org)) in the past, scholarships are available for *any* camp or workshop, including

- ✓ **Mainwoods** (August, [mainwoodsdancecamp.org](http://mainwoodsdancecamp.org))
- ✓ **Statewide** (May, [folkdance.com/event/statewide-2025](http://folkdance.com/event/statewide-2025))
- ✓ **Laguna Festival** (March, [lagunainternationaldancers.com](http://lagunainternationaldancers.com))
- ✓ **June Camp** in the Midwest ([sites.google.com/site/junecampifd](http://sites.google.com/site/junecampifd))
- ✓ **East European Folklife Center Balkan music and dance camps** ([eefc.org](http://eefc.org))
- ✓ **Lark Camp** (July, [larkcamp.org](http://larkcamp.org))
- ✓ **Kolo Festival** (Thanksgiving weekend, [kolofestival.org](http://kolofestival.org))
- ✓ **Bay Area Country Dance Society camps** ([bacds.org/camps](http://bacds.org/camps))

Also check out the listing on the **National Folk Organization** website for more ideas ([nfo-usa.com/camps-and-workshops](http://nfo-usa.com/camps-and-workshops)). To apply, fill out the form at [folkdance.com/services/scholarship-fund](http://folkdance.com/services/scholarship-fund) at least 45 days before the start of your event.



Save the Date

Save the Date

# 2025 Statewide Dance Festival

## May Day in the Village

### May 2 to 4, 2025



At the Portuguese Hall, 707 Huasna Rd. in the Village of Arroyo Grande, five miles from the beach



**Two Master Teachers:**



**Željko Jergan**  
Croatian dances



**Billy Burke**  
No. Macedonian dances & more



**Live Music by Chubritza**



More info to follow at [www.statewide.folkdance.com](http://www.statewide.folkdance.com)

# STATEWIDE 2025 FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL

May 2-4

Portuguese Hall, 707 Huasna Road, Arroyo Grande



(Please register individually, one form per person)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Group, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

**FESTIVAL PACKAGE** (Includes ALL workshops and parties EXCEPT Saturday Dinner and Sunday Box lunch – see below)

{ } \$150 when payment is received by **January 31**

{ } \$170 when payment is received by **March 31**

**Daily Events ONLY** for early registration received by March 31

{ ) \$65 Friday afternoon dance workshop and evening dance.

{ } \$90 All day Saturday, AM and PM workshops and evening dance.

{ } \$30 Sunday morning workshop, Sunday afternoon no charge.

**Subtotal: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

## AT THE DOOR

<b>Friday</b>	
<b>Classes</b>	<b>\$35</b>
<b>Party</b>	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	
<b>AM Classes</b>	<b>\$35</b>
<b>PM Classes</b>	<b>\$35</b>
<b>Party</b>	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	
<b>Reviews</b>	<b>\$35</b>
<b>Afternoon</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$220</b>

## Additional offerings:

(Meals available ONLY with pre-registration)

{ } \$43 Saturday Happy Hour and Catered Dinner.

{ } \$19 box lunch with water bottle

{ } \$19 Souvenir Cross Body Tote Bag,  
made of lightweight recycled material,  
with side pocket for phone or water bottle:



**Total enclosed: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

## Host hotel: Hampton Inn and Suites

1400 W Branch St, Arroyo Grande.

Group rates are available; see link on Statewide website.

The Arroyo Grande Village is a short walk from the hall and provides a wide variety of dining opportunities.

**To register with this mail-in form:** Send form with your check (made payable to *Folk Dance Federation of CA, South*) to: Statewide registrar, c/o M. Lange, 421 N Las Flores Dr, Nipomo, CA 93444. Please write one check for registration and additional offerings. **Online Registration:** [Statewide.folkdance.com](http://Statewide.folkdance.com). Visit the Statewide 2025 webpage [statewide.folkdance.com](http://statewide.folkdance.com) for the latest information about schedules, teachers, hotels, restaurants, parking, directions, etc.

Masks are optional; proof of vaccination requirements will follow CDC, State, and County COVID regulations at the time of the event. Statewide 2025 is sponsored by the Folk Dance Federation of California, South, a non-profit organization.

Feb. 28 - March 2, 2025



# Laguna Folk Dance Festival



Featuring  
**Tineke Van Geel**  
teaching Armenian folk dances  
and  
**Maurits Van Geel**  
teaching  
International folk dances



Melanie Lawson will return  
to lead a sing-along.

**Also LIVE music, dance parties, happy hours, great food, an ice cream social,  
Sunday concert, and awarding of the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award.**

Plus beach  
dancing on  
Monday!



In the beautiful Clubhouse 2 ballroom  
at **24112 Moulton Parkway, Laguna Woods, CA**

**REGISTER** at [lagunainternationaldancers.com](http://lagunainternationaldancers.com)  
Questions? Call Greg Solloway at (972) 467-1406

Non-residents, please tell the gate you were invited by the Laguna International Dancers (Pres. Miriam Kahn).

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



There isn't a prize this month for identifying this photo, but you can send your guess to [editor@folkdance.com](mailto:editor@folkdance.com) or [loui@loutitucker.com](mailto:loui@loutitucker.com). Look for the contest elsewhere.



I started folk dancing accidentally during college in 1966. I had never heard of folk dancing. Prior to that, my only experience with dance was square dancing in gym class when the weather kept us indoors.

We had been told there was square dancing every Sunday night in the gym. My friend and I showed up – not a square in sight. Instead, people were lined up, moving to unfamiliar music. We were told they were doing folk dances from many different countries, and they would be teaching many of them. We were encouraged to stay.

I quickly became hooked and attended regularly. I remember learning Šetnja and Ajde Lepo Maro early on. It probably helped that two of the leaders lived in the dorm across the lawn from my dorm. We were mostly college students and accustomed to learning and remembering. They taught more than 100 dances during my freshman year, from slow and easy (Šetnja) to fast or challenging (Daichovo and Hambo). I liked all the variety. The campus Russian Club wanted dancers for their annual concert, so we learned and performed dances for that. During the summers I found some local folk dance groups in Pomona and Pasadena. I attended at least part of the 1967 Statewide Festival at the Long Beach Convention Center – so many dancers there!

After college, my wife and I continued to folk dance, first in Whittier, Long Beach, and Garden Grove; later, in Orange County. We used to take our newborn daughter along, and she slept on the floor.

I finally attended my first folk dance camp at Idyllwild in the late 1980s. Stockton Camp and Scandia Camp Mendocino soon followed.

So, an accidental start to folk dancing turned into more than 50 years of fun, friends, and helping others learn and enjoy folk dancing.

## *In the last issue*



## WE HAVE A WINNER!

Ray Sundby (his name was misspelled in the last issue) and Douce Massenkoff are dancing Rørospols (also Røros Pols). The winner of the contest was Steve Himel. He won the *Let's Dance!* photo contest once before, but it was before the winner was invited to share his or her dance history with readers. So...

## Meet Steve Himel

## The NFO Mentoring Project

The National Folk Organization (NFO) Mentoring Project is a program that supports the work and goals of folk dance communities in the U.S., providing folk dancers access to information that supports their efforts to maintain and grow their communities. We have a cadre of mentors who work one-on-one or in a group setting with mentees who want to learn how to teach folk dancing or expand a club's repertoire, how to run a folk dance club or increase attendance, or how to put on a dance event.

In 2024, we grew to be a team of 16 mentors. A couple of mentors resigned during 2024, but we were very happy to welcome three new mentors this past November!

Our monthly mentor Meetup is one way the Mentoring Project provides support and shares resources with our volunteer mentors. These 1-hour monthly Zoom meetings never fail to educate and entertain. It's like talking about your favorite subjects – folk dancing – with some of the brightest, most experienced teachers. Some topics discussed the past year include:

- Reading and discussing a selection of Loui Tucker's articles about folk dance
- Considering various teacher training curricula
- Sharing current and ongoing successes/challenges that our mentees are working through
- Sharing resources such as the Toastmasters' solutions for how to extinguish filler words like uh, um, like, okay, I mean, you know!
- At one meetup, we invited mentors AND their mentees, resulting in a lively, supportive conversation!

If you are looking for support for your folk dance community, maybe we can help. If you're in a position to share your expertise with others, come help us spread the joy. Fill out an application to be either a mentor or a mentee on our website: [nfo-usa.com/the-nfo-mentoring-project](http://nfo-usa.com/the-nfo-mentoring-project).

## FESTIVALS IN YOUR FUTURE

### THE 63RD ASIA FOLK DANCE CAMP

Got some frequent flyer miles you need to use? How about a folk dance camp in Taiwan? It's held at Taichung City in the Shalu District Friday, February 7 to Sunday, February 9. Jan Makolski-Toho will teach Polish dances, and Oikawa Ryoichi will teach Japanese dances. Technically the registration deadline is past, but if you really want to attend, contact Fang Chich Chen at [fangchich34@gmail.com](mailto:fangchich34@gmail.com).

### NORWEGIAN DANCE AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

Come to Folklore Village in Dodgeville, Wisconsin for a Norwegian dance and music festival **March 21-23**.

What will you get to experience at Folklore Village? Fabulous meals by Red Barn Catering, a beautiful location with a great dance floor, places for music classes, and a reconstructed Norwegian log cabin – all that in addition to the chance to be introduced to the fun springleik from Folldal in Norway. Register at [folklorevillage.org/spring-norwegian-music-and-dance-weekend](http://folklorevillage.org/spring-norwegian-music-and-dance-weekend).



Folklore Village in Wisconsin.

### DANCE ON THE BAY 2025

This is a one-day folk dance festival to be held **Saturday, March 29** at North Bayside Grange in North Bend, Oregon. Two international folk dance teachers will teach morning and afternoon workshops: Roo Lester (Basque and Scandia) and Gigi Jensen (Latin American). Evening dance party featuring live and recorded music. Info: [rosecontra@gmail.com](mailto:rosecontra@gmail.com).

### JUNE CAMP

This is a residential international folk dance weekend **June 12-15** at Lake Forest Academy in Lake Forest, Illinois (near Chicago). Steve Kotansky is the featured teacher, with nightly live music parties with Tom Pixton, Ralph Iverson, and Brian Wilson. Registration opens in March. Info at [JuneCamp.org](http://JuneCamp.org) or [junecampifd@gmail.com](mailto:junecampifd@gmail.com).

# Mist on the Mountain

(So. Scotland)

Robert McOwen devised this dance with Margaret Lepley in 2008 and dedicated it to Marianne Taylor, who had written its beautiful tune. The band Tullochgorum recorded the dance in 2011 on the album *Shining Lights*. This dance was presented by Robert McOwen at the 2024 Stockton Summer Dance Camp. It was also taught by Kamrin MacKnight at the Folk Dance Federation’s Officers Ball in November 2024.

Music: 3/4 meter, 32 meas waltz      Music: [pixton.org/download/download-robert-mcowen.html](http://pixton.org/download/download-robert-mcowen.html)

Video: On YouTube, search for “Mist on the Mountain Waltz.”

Formation: Circle of couples around the room, in ballroom hold; M’s back to center.

Steps & Basic Waltz Turn: Full CW turn using 6 steps and two measures. M begins with L, W with R.

Styling: Balance Step: Spring onto R (ct 1); bring L heel to R instep, straightening L and take the wt onto the ball of L and R is lifted slightly (ct 2); step R in place, extending L diag L and lifted slightly (ct 3). This movement generally moves fwd or bkwd and can be done with opp ftwk. Note: This is a pas de basque done in waltz time, i.e. 3 cts per meas rather than 4 cts per meas.

Chassé: Step L to L (ct 1); step R next to L (ct 2); step L to L (ct 3). In short, a step-together-step (no hop). Typically done in ballroom position, with steps taken to the side, and can be done with opp ftwk.

Allemande Hold: Facing in same direction, M on L of W, M slightly behind W. Hands are joined in W position. R hands joined with M’s R arm extended behind W to her R. L hands joined with W’s L arm extended in front of M. Also known as Varsouvienne position.



Allemande Hold.

Meas	3/4 meter	PATTERN
4 meas	INTRODUCTION. Stand in place in ballroom pos. Acknowledge ptr. M’s steps are described; W use opp ftwk until otherwise noted. CHASSÉ, W SOLO TURN, WALTZ.	
1-2	Beg L, Chassé CCW (cts 1-3). Step L to L (ct 1); point R to R side (ct 2); hold (ct 3).	
3-4	Repeat Meas 1-2, with opp ftwk and direction, moving CW.	
5-6	M raise L hand and release R hand. M beg R waltz in place as W beg R turn R under raised arm with two waltz steps.	
7-8	Resume ballroom pos and dance one Basic Waltz Turn.	
9-12	Repeat meas 1-4. TRANSITION TO ALLEMAND HOLD.	
13-14	Repeat meas 5-6 but finish facing ptr with R hands joined at chest height.	
15-16	Waltz step bkwd. Then M step R in place, face CCW and point L fwd while W step L-R, face CCW and point L fwd. During meas 4, lift R hands over W’s head and finish in Allemande Hold facing CCW.	

Mist on the Mountain – continued

STEP-BRUSHES CCW AND CW, BALANCE, SOLO TURNS, WALTZ.  
M and W use same ftwk until meas 28.

- 17 Facing and moving CCW, step L fwd (ct 1); brush R fwd and hold with pointed toe (cts 2-3);  
18 Repeat meas 17 with opp ftwk.  
19-20 Beg L, three steps fwd (cts 1-3); pivot on L to R to face CW and point R fwd (cts 1, 2);  
hold (ct 3).  
21-24 Repeat meas 17-20 with opp ftwk and direction. Finish  
facing CCW, L pointed fwd.  
25-26 Beg L, Balance Step fwd and back. Release R handhold.  
27 Beg L, W step L in front of R to begin waltzing, turning R  
under joined L hands (cts 1-3) while M steps L-R in place  
(cts 1, 2), then steps L fwd, turning R under joined L hands  
to face W.  
28 Beg R, M waltz step in place while W take two steps in  
place and touch R next to L (ct 3). During this meas,  
release L hands and take ballroom pos. M and W now use  
opp ftwk.  
29-32 Moving CCW, two Basic Waltz Turns. End with M's back  
to ctr.



Sequence: Repeat dance as many times as the music allows.

# Nirkoda Romani

**Romanian dances with Sonia Dion & Cristian Florescu, and Israeli dances with Aaron Alpert!**

**Feb. 15-16, 2025**

**Saturday 2/15: Etz Chayim**  
4161 Alma St., Palo Alto  
Teach 2-5:30, party 7:30-11p

**Sunday 2/16: Masonic Lodge**  
890 Church St., Mount'n View  
Teach 2-5:30, party 7:30-11p

**Pricing, registration, and more:**  
[nirkoda.com/romani](http://nirkoda.com/romani)

**Questions? Ask Aaron at**  
[aaron@nirkoda.com](mailto:aaron@nirkoda.com)



## A BLAST FROM THE PAST

When Statewide or any other large folk dance event was scheduled for a particular locale, restaurants near the venue placed ads in *Let's Dance!* with the hope that dancers would patronize them during the festival. *Let's Dance!* had a readership in the thousands in the 1960s, and 500-900 dancers attended the biggest events, so trying to attract some of those dancers made advertising a good investment.

The ads below appeared in the October 1961 issue, when the annual Harvest Festival was held in Fresno. There were three entire pages full of similar ads.

<p><b>THE LEILANI</b> Cocktails Chinese Food - Steak - Fried Chicken Phone: AD 7-6101 1425 BLACKSTONE AVE - FRESNO</p>	<p>Home Cooking • SERVED FAMILY STYLE <b>Basque Hotel</b> THE RIGHT PLACE TO EAT WINE • BEER • COCKTAILS AD 7-0422 JEAN NOUQUERET 1102 F STREET MARY NOUQUERET FRESNO, CALIF.</p>
<p><b>CHRISMAN'S RESTAURANT</b> 1035 OLIVE AVENUE ° FRESNO Home of Chrisman's Famous Fried Chicken &amp; Fine Food</p>	<p><b>DI CICCIO'S PIZZERIA</b> FOUR SONS OF ITALY THE FINEST IN ITALIAN FOODS PIZZA, SPAGHETTI, LASAGNA, RAVIOLI OPEN 4 P.M. TO 3 A.M. 530 BLACKSTONE AD 7-7054</p>

The ad below appeared often during the 1960s. The company also advertised in *Sets in Order*, a magazine for square dance callers.

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DANCE FLOOR  
USE  
**SLO-DOWN**  
*By Velco*

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NO DUST - NO PARRAFIN  
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P.O. Box 69894  
Los Angeles 69, Calif.

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**Some of my happiest moments  
have been dancing.**

**~ Claire Danes**



advertisement

# **Folk Dance Scene**

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

To get a **free** 6-month trial subscription, just call Sandy: (310) 391-7382, or Email: [circulation@FolkDanceScene.org](mailto:circulation@FolkDanceScene.org)

To subscribe, it is just \$25 a year for 10 issues - \$10 for an Email version.  
Send to Jan Rayman, 4827 Grand Ave., La Canada, CA 91011