

Let's Dance!

THE MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING **3** OCTOBER 2025



FEDERATION SCHOLARSHIPS FUND OUR FUTURE



**Matching Grant
Ends October 5**



See p. 11.

*I hope to see you at the
Officers Ball in Pleasanton on
Saturday, October 4. Register at
folkdance.com or see p. 24.*



Let's Dance!

Volume 82, No. 8

OCTOBER 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:

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Member clubs	\$50	\$90	All ads are in
All others	\$80	\$120	COLOR

Mail checks to: Loui Tucker, Editor
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WELCOME NEW FEDERATION MEMBERS

Lyn Ayal – San Bruno

Libby Smith – San Francisco

Eileen Morris and Chris Dawes – Chico

Jeanne-Marie and Sophia Hughes – San Francisco

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Laura Richardson

Why do you dance? Why does anyone dance? How can a joyous activity like folk dancing survive against the backdrop of so much difficulty, anxiety and sorrow? I think we need folk dancing now more than ever, and for a variety of reasons. Being in a circle with friends, moving together – I think the solidarity of this activity is comforting and builds community. We learn about people, places and times far away and long ago, which can provide insight into our troubled world today. Working up a good sweat on the dance floor is exhausting and strangely energizing at the same time. Our feet get tired, but our brains become more awake. The music washes over me. I breathe more fully, and I straighten my spine. I ponder sometimes how I can encourage the people around me to become more relaxed and more tolerant. I think folk dancing offers a solution for some of the isolation and mistrust of others that seem so prevalent in our modern, digitally-addicted world. *All we need to do is figure out how to get people to try it!*

This is where you come in...

How do we help the next generation of dancers find us? I would like your ideas about how to introduce dancing to MORE PEOPLE. This includes high school- and/or college-aged people in the Bay Area. It seems like the 20s was the decade when lots of us started to dance obsessively. Perhaps a dance event that bunches of younger folks can attend together, low cost and low risk, where our very excellent local teachers can teach some fun and energetic dances.

Then we need to consider how to build on that and figure out how to guide those participants to our local classes. I know many of you have experience as teachers, counselors, physical education specialists – send me your thoughts. What works and what does not work? In 2026 I would love to focus on building the membership of the Folk Dance Federation, including bringing younger dancers into the family. Send me your ideas: president@folkdance.com, and thank you for your help!

By the way, your support to the **Federation Scholarship Fund** is greatly appreciated. There are many ways you can donate easily, and they are listed on our website: folkdance.com/donate. Paypal, credit card, Zelle, or by check – all methods are welcome. Specify “Scholarship Fund” with your donation. Your donation is tax deductible!

Also, the **Officers Ball at the Veterans Memorial Hall on Saturday, 4 October in Pleasanton** will be a fundraiser for scholarships. You can also donate to this worthy cause when you renew your membership in the Federation. Every dollar donated to scholarships will enable more students to attend dance events.

I hope you have been enjoying summer adventures. I had a wonderful time at Stockton Folk Dance Camp this year, and I learned a lot of new dances from the talented instructional staff. Besides the scheduled classes by the master teachers, a surprising and fun extra class for me was learning to yodel led by Andy Taylor and Emily Saletan.

Yodeling is not what I thought it was. Andy learned to yodel at the feet of Werner von Trapp – yes, that von Trapp family, the one you associate with hiking over The Alps to freedom. This delightful form of community singing grabbed my heart fully, and I learned just enough to kickstart my own yodeling adventures.

This is the kind of unexpected gift that you find when you venture into the world with curiosity as your guide. Culture is broad and deep, and it is worthy of our respect and attention. Learn, then share, so that what is good in the world will not fade.

Next year Stockton Dance Camp is moving to the University of California in Santa Cruz. After 78 years in Stockton, this location change will position the Camp to serve the dance community for many more years. The magic of Stockton will linger, transplanted closer to the Pacific Ocean! Next year the dancing will be wrapped up in cooling ocean breezes. Bring a jacket and be prepared to soak in the beauty of the coastal redwood forests. As a bonus, Santa Cruz is a prime destination for beach fun.

Stay healthy and happy and keep moving to the beat!



Laura Richardson. Photo by E. Khuner.

Don't forget to register for the Officers Ball on October 4.
See p. 24.



Jim Gold International Folk Tours 2026

Travel, adventure, fun, folk dance, culture

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

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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.



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CROATIA: July 6-20

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

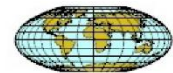
BALKAN SPLENDOR ~ 5 COUNTRIES: July 26-August 11

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.

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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.

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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 (Community tab).

- SEPT. 27** **DAVID AND MARIJA HILLIS 25th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY PARTY.** They are celebrating and you're invited! Live Oak Park. A couple of sets of English country dances with live music, then other dancing. 2:30-4:30. Info: davidhillis1@comcast.net.
- OCT. 4** **THE OFFICERS BALL.** Veterans Hall, 302 Main Street, Pleasanton. Institute with six local teachers, on-site dinner, evening all-request dance party. This is the Folk Dance Federation's annual fundraiser, and this year's fundraising focuses on the Scholarship Fund. Register early for a discounted package and to get the Federation's 2026 Calendar for only \$5. Info: folkdance.com. **See registration form on p. 24.**
- OCT. 10-12** **NORTH-SOUTH TEACHERS' SEMINAR.** Monte Toyon, 220 Cloister Lane, Aptos. \$270-\$320 depending on accommodations. Teachers: Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion. Info: northsouthfolkdance@gmail.com.
- OCT. 12** **PENINSULA COUNCIL FOLK DANCE PARTY.** St. Bede's Church Hall, 2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park. 7-10 pm. *Please note this is a Sunday.* It's a Romanian-themed party with guests Cristian Florecu and Sonia Dion. The co-emcee will be Ken Kaye and Adony Beniares. \$10. Info and requests: pfdcparty@gmail.com.
- OCT. 17** **LIVE MUSIC WITH BULGARIKA.** Veterans Memorial Hall, 401 Highland Avenue, Piedmont. 7:30-10 pm. Sponsored by the East Bay Folk Dancers.
- OCT. 18** **CAFÉ SHALOM MONTHLY ISRAELI DANCE PARTY.** Congregation Am Tikvah, 625 Brotherhood Way, San Francisco. 7:30-11:30 pm. \$10. Info: udy@yahoo.com; 669-444-1284.
- OCT. 19** **KOPACHKA'S BULGARIAN FOLK DANCE PARTY.** Live music with Bulgarika on their tour of the US. Strawberry Park Recreation Center, 118 E. Strawberry Drive, Mill Valley. \$15 (\$7 students, children free with supervision). Info: Kopachkadancers.com. **See ad on p. 26.**
- OCT. 20** **BULGARIKA AT NORTH BAY DANCERS IN PETALUMA.** Hermann Sons Hall, 860 Western Avenue in Petaluma. Info: 415-663-9512 or cjay@horizoncable.com.
- OCT. 24** **50th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT.** Łowiczanie Polish Folk Ensemble. Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. 6 pm reception, 7:30 curtain. Info: polishfolk.org.
- OCT. 31-
NOV. 2** **FALL CAMP.** Brandeis-Bardin, 1101 Peppertree Lane, Brandeis, near Simi Valley in Southern California. \$270-\$540 depending on accommodations. Main teacher Catherine Rudin, with more to be announced. Info: DanceFallCamp@gmail.com. **See registration form on p. 28.**



THE FAMILY PHOTO ALBUM

Photos by L. Tucker



Heidi Vorst from Portland, Oregon, and George Fairbrook from Stockton, California, shared a waltz at Stockton Camp in August.



Ellis and Ben Bruxvoort, children of Joel and Barbara Bruxvoort, have become regulars at Stockton Camp, recently joined by Ben's wife Anna (inset).



Changs members Craig Blackstone and Ellen and Ben Ron posed for the camera during the second week of Stockton Camp.

Paul Lowenstein and Stephanie Seymour enjoyed dancing on the deck at The Land on a sunny Saturday in August.



Three generations of the Uggla clan, plus dozens of friends, gathered in Shingle Springs to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of Dave and Joyce (center). See story on p. 27.



Isaac and Beth Berezovsky stuck plastic fruit slices to their shirts with double-stick tape for the Saratoga Folk Dancers Citrus Celebration.





CALIFORNIA KOLO FESTIVAL

28-30 November, 2025

Croatian American Cultural Center, San Francisco



Cristian & Sonia



Tanya Dimitrov



Roberto Bagnoli



Maria Bebelekova



John Morovich



Fanfare Zambaleta



Sinovi



Chubritza



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www.kolofestival.org

FEDERATION SCHOLARSHIPS CREATE DANCE EXPERIENCES – Part Two

Allison Borman

What's the best way to describe paradise? Well, to me, it can be done in just four short words: Stockton Folk Dance Camp. Picture this: Over 100, kind, loving, and encouraging people all coming together to share in the beautiful medium of dance. You're being called to join in the fun, welcomed with open arms. It is a place where you can dance until your heart is content. The dances were everything from beautiful waltzes to lively contras, worshipful Israeli dances to an energetic, complicated foot work dance from Romania.



If you happen to ever be feeling overwhelmed, lost, or bewildered by the steps being taught, never fear – there are always at least three people eager to help and guide you.

It doesn't just stop with the dancing either. There are fun activities, like the banquet, the auctions, the talent show, and of course the after-parties! The after-parties are where you get to know all of the amazing people even better. In essence, at Stockton Camp you can dance from sunup to well after sundown. It's heaven for dancers.

I truly believe it is the style of dancing – folk dancing – that draws such incredible people together. This was my first time at something like this so as the instructors explained the origins of each of the dances I was amazed by the common thread found in each of them: community. Many of the dances were danced in a closed circle, which means everyone was either joined by the hands or with arms on one another's shoulders. This means you can see everyone in the group, see each other's smiles, feel everyone moving together, moving the circle along.

Other dances are done with a leader, usually on the right end of the line of dancers. In places where such dances are traditionally done, everyone knows everyone else so well when the leader makes a hand gesture to indicate the next step, everyone knows what the next step will be.

In the shoulder-hold dances, if someone has a shoulder injury, they do not put their arms on the

dancers next to them but leave them down. The neighbor places his or her hand around the injured person's shoulder to protect it.

These three brief insights taught me this: Folk dance is a place of community, a place of being known, welcomed and cared for. It is a place where people look out for each other.

And oh my, how this way of being and living pervades this Camp! These people don't leave it on the dance floor; they take it with them and share it with every person they meet. Outside of the dancing, I watched as many people donated their time, goods, and money with tremendous generosity to help fund the scholarships for next year's participants. I watched multiple instances where people gave treasures to those who couldn't afford it, even if it was something they wanted.

If you want to be a part of a community that is kind, welcoming, generous, and joyful, if you want to connect with beautiful cultures from around the world through dance and learn about their histories, if you want to have one of the best weeks of your life – go to Stockton Folk Dance Camp.

Betsy Richardson

I am so grateful for the opportunity I had to go to Stockton Folk Dance Camp! As a first year camper, I was excited to be introduced to the cozy community that exists there. It felt like I was being welcomed into a big group of friends!



Some of my favorite dances included the Polish partner dances and the Israeli dances. They were fun and made me think! As a folk dancer at Brigham Young University, I hope to share these dances with my friends.

All the people are amazing! I loved Cristian and Sonia's enthusiasm as teachers, and it was fun to see them finish each other's sentences as they taught. I was also thoroughly impressed by all the energy everyone had. I was so surprised that people

significantly older than I am had the ability to dance until dawn, when I was exhausted!

Overall, learning new dances and making new friends was very rewarding and fun. I hope to return to Stockton Camp in the future, and I am grateful for the scholarships and donors that made it possible for me to attend this year.

Boden Cadwallader

I attended the first week of Stockton Folk Dance Camp in Stockton, California. I hoped to expand my knowledge of culture and dance by learning from the master teachers. Over seven days I attended several classes per day and learned dances from countries including Poland, Romania, and the Basque region.



Stockton Folk Dance Camp was a great experience for me. I thought the teachers were amazing; each one had a unique way of teaching. I especially liked Roo Lester, Sonia Dion, and Cristian Florescu. One of my favorite dances was Hegi from the Basque region. I'm excited to teach it to the rest of my troupe.

Thank you, Folk Dance Federation of California, for your support in making this opportunity possible.

Sierra Gilbert

This year at Stockton Folk Dance Camp was amazing! This was my third year at Camp. One thing in particular that I thought was fun was that some of the Once-Over-Lightly reviews at the end of the day were themed after a different decade.



My favorite teacher, Richard Powers, was teaching again this year. That was fun because I like being able to completely warm up and learn in the morning with different partner dances when the classes are on the smaller side.

Two of my sister's favorite teachers – Cristian and Sonia – taught this year as well. They taught Romanian dances which were really fun. They are also really nice people to talk with.

Thank you to the Folk Dance Federation of California for sponsoring my experience at Stockton Folk Dance Camp this year.

Sophia Gilbert

I am Sophia Gilbert and I am 16 years old. I have been dancing for almost my whole life.

For me, Stockton Folk Dance Camp has brought me joy and happiness every time I have gone. I love how each dance teacher has his or her own way of teaching and style of humor. It's not just the teachers that make Stockton Folk Dance Camp a pleasure. The people on staff there work hard just to make our week so easy. They often work so hard they only occasionally get in some dancing.



Of course all the other dancers make everything come to life. All ages come together, and everyone is part of the family regardless of when they started dancing or when they joined. I feel supported and welcomed and I am sure others feel the same way. Although a few people may be scared of the intensity of the camp, you can take things slowly without judgment and get help and support from everyone around you. Besides the main dance classes, there is one in the afternoon I like called Dances for All Ages.

This is my fourth year at Stockton Folk Dance Camp, and I don't want to ever stop going. I love the dances, but I have met so many wonderful people. This dance camp has many people that I think of as my role models, and I strive to be like them.

I have to also thank the Folk Dance Federation of California for giving me a scholarship. They are such a wonderful organization, and I couldn't thank them enough for their hard work and dedication to folk dancing.

continued on p. 10.

These young dancers, and the ones who shared their dance experiences with *Let's Dance!* readers last month, have benefited directly from the **Folk Dance Federation Scholarship Fund**. These are your dollars are at work making dance events possible for them.

The Scholarship Fund has been given a matching grant this year to help replenish the coffers. **Any donation you can make** between now and the end of the Officers Ball on October 4 **will be doubled**. See details on how to donate on p. 11.

Scholarships Create Dance Experiences – cont'd

Auryn Voss

Stockton is always such a fun camp to attend. It feels like a reunion more and more each year I come.

I'm so grateful for all the assistance I receive, especially that of the California Federation. It is the only reason I am able to attend camp each year.

This year I was fighting with a hip issue which left me unable to do quite as much as I would have liked, but the schedule is accommodating, and the teachers, as always, are amazing.

So many great memories this year! One of my favorites was staying up until 3:15 am Sunday morning for the last after-party of the week. We were all exhausted and agreed to call it quits after a Lesnoto. Since a Lesnoto is a type of dance that can be done to so many tunes, there ended up being seven Lesnotos on the queue. After a laugh we decided that we would only do one of them. I didn't get to bed until almost 4 am and had to wake up early for checkout!

I learned so much this year, and learned about Carpathian culture from Andy, which I had never known was a distinct culture until now.

In Romanian class I gained more confidence to make noise while dancing, singing to the songs and adding in yips, because of Cristian and Sonia's welcoming and enthusiastic nature. We had a wonderful ceremony to honor the late, great Yves Moreau when Ahmet Lüleci spread his ashes in the university's rose garden.

This was our last year at the Stockton campus, and while I haven't been attending for many years, I will miss it. As always, Stockton is truly the highlight of my year. I am looking forward to Stockton Camp in Santa Cruz in 2026!

Landon Shumway

I first heard about Stockton Folk Dance Camp a year ago from some of my classmates at Brigham Young University. We had been part of BYU's folk dance club the semester before, and two of them had just returned from attending Stockton Camp when we were starting fall classes again. They invited me to go with



them the next year, and I was looking for opportunities to dance more and get involved with the community, so it seemed like a good place to start.

I had no idea what I was getting into. Between learning the dances of Poland, Brazil, Romania, and even the United States, what happened at Stockton Camp was absolutely dreamy. Making friends with people of all ages and backgrounds and connecting with people who love dancing as much as I do was a blessing I will always remember.

As a dancer trained in ballet, I've only had limited exposure to folk dancing through BYU's folk dance club. However, beginning with the invitation to attend Stockton Camp, I've been learning more about folk dance, and it has become one of my favorite genres! I love it because it involves regular people with regular lives coming together to move and dance. You don't need special training and you don't need to be comfortable being in the spotlight. You don't even need to be young! Folk dancing is a chance for everyone to share in the joy of movement.

All people who have ever lived are members of the same human family, and each has a story that deserves to be shared. Dancing has a powerful ability to communicate emotion that words or music alone can't. As I've learned about folk dance, I've realized that it creates an intimate opportunity to connect with these narratives from the past. Through it, people living now can feel and live what was happening then. By learning and doing the dances of history, we honor the legacies of those who have gone before. I think this is the greatest gift we can give them, and being at Stockton was an unforgettable opportunity to do this.

Liana Jankovich

Stockton Folk Dance Camp was a wonderful opportunity to connect with members of the folk dance community and learn new styles of dance. I had an amazing experience thanks to how inviting everyone at Camp was. Everyone was so willing to help me with the dances, especially ones that weren't taught at this year's Camp but were played in the evenings. Multiple dances were cued for me by the various dancers I ended up next to or partnered with, which helped me feel included.

The structure of the camp itself was also set up to welcome in new dancers. One of my favorite evenings was the Candle-Lighting Ceremony on Wednesday night, when the first year campers were specifically



invited to share their candle's flame with the other dancers until we all held a lit candle.

This year's classes and teachers were amazing, and Camp offered so many opportunities to dance. There was so much dance packed into one week! I only wish I had more time and could have attended all of the available classes. The Polish class specifically was new to me stylistically and it was exciting to spend a week focusing on various regions and dances. I also really enjoyed the Romanian and Carpathian classes. We had live accompaniment to dance to in the evenings, which was exciting because that is not something I often have access to.

The Talent Show at the end of the week and the willingness of the other dancers that came with me from Brigham Young University gave me the opportunity to set and perform my first group choreography. I loved having that experience in addition to the scheduled classes and events.

Because it was the last year at this University of the Pacific campus in Stockton, a list of all of the dances that have been taught at Stockton was printed and put up around the room, which showed me just how many dances this community knows that are available for me to learn! It was also great to be able to recognize some of the dances that were familiar to the recreational community at BYU.

I'm graduating next year, and I'm very grateful to have a thriving community of recreational dancing available for me outside of a college setting. I'm so grateful for the opportunity I had to attend Stockton Folk Dance Camp and the scholarships that made it possible for me to get there.

Tanner Meeks

Over the summer I was able to attend Stockton Folk Dance Camp. I expected it to be fun, but I had no idea of how large an impact it would have on me.

Our group from Brigham Young University was accepted and made to feel at home. I found a thriving community, bonded by a love for dance and a love of celebrating what makes each culture and individual unique. Throughout the week, we had the opportunity to learn from world-class teachers, learning dances from countries such as Romania and Poland. There were music classes that included singing, yodeling, and music from the Balkans. Every class was engaging and rewarding. In the evening, we gathered to review the



SCHOLARSHIP FUND MATCHING GRANT

A Matching Grant will double your impact!

The Folk Dance Federation has been offered a matching grant for any donation made to the Scholarship Fund between now and midnight on Saturday, October 4. There are many ways you can make your donation happen:

1. Write a check made payable to the **Folk Dance Federation** with "*Scholarship Fund*" on the memo line. Mail it to Sabine Zappe, Federation Treasurer, 153 Race Street, San Jose, CA 95126
2. **Register for** and attend the **Officers Ball on October 4**, bring your check, and/or participate in the 50/50 drawing. Registration form is also attached. All proceeds from the Officers Ball and the 50/50 drawing will go toward the Federation's Scholarship Fund.
3. Go to folkdance.com/donate and donate using Paypal or your credit card. Select "Scholarship" at the "Use this donation for" prompt.
4. Send a donation from your bank via Zelle to treasurer@folkdance.com, with a notation that your donation is for the Scholarship Fund.

The Federation Scholarship Committee gave about \$10,000 in scholarships this past summer and it would be wonderful to replenish the Scholarship Fund to that level.

Also, if you register for the Officers Ball (see p. 24), you can pay just \$5 for the **2026 Folk Dance Calendar**. After October 4, the calendars will be \$10 each (plus shipping if you want it mailed).

dances learned during the day, followed by an after-party where we sometimes danced until 1 or 2 am!

Our group also rehearsed a clogging number to share in the end-of-week Talent Show.

Stockton was a folk dancer's paradise – truly, a marvelous program and one that has already been formative in my dancing journey.

Our First CIOFF Festival Tour: ADAC in Romania

by Alexandra Shadle, Artistic Director

International Dance Arts Collective & American Dance Arts Collective

This summer was historic for us! For the very first time, the American Dance Arts Collective (ADAC) – the touring branch of International Dance Arts Collective (IDAC) – participated in a CIOFF® Festival. We've had wonderful cultural exchange tours before, in Guatemala and New York, but this was our first time representing the United States abroad as official performing ambassadors. It was a responsibility we prepared for and carried with pride.

Our journey began in Cluj-Napoca, where we rehearsed in our hotel and also explored some of Romania's treasures. We hiked through the beautiful Cheile Turzii gorge and descended hundreds of feet underground at the Salina Turda, a former salt mine that once made Romania a leading exporter of salt. The next day, a spirited local guide led us through Cluj on foot. We admired Saint Michael's Cathedral, discovered ancient Roman ruins unearthed beneath the city, and visited a bustling folk arts market. One artisan insisted (in Romanian) that my twins have crocheted hair clips in the colors of the Romanian flag. So of course, I had to buy them. That sweet interaction full of warmth set the tone for what we would encounter again and again: kindness everywhere we went.

From there, we boarded a bus to the idyllic town of Vatra Dornei, where our CIOFF Festival adventure truly began. Although our group had traveled the farthest to attend, we were joined by ensembles from across Romania, as well as from Bulgaria, Italy, and Spain's Basque Country.

The magic began even before the official program. At our very first tech rehearsal, groups wandered toward the stage in the park, eyeing one another shyly. Then, out of nowhere, the Basque drummer began to play. Within moments, their dancers grabbed hands and pulled our dancers into their line. Suddenly, the entire park became a spontaneous international dance party! Although we didn't share a common language, music and movement united us instantly.

On the opening day of the festival, I had the honor of joining our students Sarah Lisonbee (California Folk Federation Scholarship recipient) and Tyler Blair to represent the United States at the town hall with the Mayor of Vatra Dornei. We exchanged gifts – ours from California, theirs from Vatra Dornei – and it was moving to realize that, for many, we were their first in-person experience of meeting Americans. We strove to be bearers of kindness, peace, and love everywhere we went.

That evening, we gave our first official performance. The organizers and judges (who were only adjudicating the Romanian ensembles) expressed special admiration for our A Cappella American clogging and our rollicking hoedown finale.

The next day, our festival guides took us on an excursion through Bucovina, where we visited a UNESCO World Heritage site, the Voroneț monastery, often called the Sistine Chapel of the East. The vivid frescoes and centuries-old artistry left us in awe.



Perhaps my favorite day of all was the cultural exchange workshop, where all the ensembles taught and learned from each other. Directors took turns leading their traditional dances, and soon children from five nations were holding hands and whirling together. It struck me powerfully: If the world could just gather, hold hands, and dance, how much more peaceful and united it could be.

On the final night, our dancers stunned the audience with their versatility, shifting in moments from lively Appalachian dancers to stately Civil War Era Spanish waltzers. The audible gasp and applause from the audience was unforgettable.



That evening, the organizers surprised and delighted us with an honorary award for the varied and authentic repertoire we had brought to Romania. We may not even have known that we were receiving an award, but we decided to open Google Translate to figure out what the announcers were saying at just the right moment. Sarah and Tyler happily received the award on behalf of our team.

After the festival, we headed south with an incredible guide to explore Sighișoara and some surrounding towns. Another highlight came during our cultural exchange with a Saxon dance group from Sighișoara. We performed our dances for one

another and then danced outside until dark, sharing steps, laughter, and joy. The connection was so real and heartfelt. At one point, a Romanian girl turned to us and said, *“I never ever thought I would meet an American in real life.”* In that moment, I felt the true meaning of our mission: breaking barriers and building bridges through dance.

This first CIOFF Festival Tour was more than a performance tour – it was a journey of friendship, learning, and cultural connection. We returned home with memories we’ll cherish forever and with a deeper commitment to our mission: to create peace, build unity, and share the beauty of cultural dance wherever we go.



All photos by A. Shadle and Orion Photography.



The author with hosts in Saxon.

International Dance Arts Collective (IDAC) will be presenting their Fall 2025 “Festivals of Light” concert Friday, November 7 at 7 pm and Saturday, November 8 at 2 pm. The venue *in the Sacramento area* is being finalized and will be announced in mid-October.

This is your chance to see an exciting group of young dancers, singers and musicians.

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

See ad on p. 14.

INTERNATIONAL DANCE ARTS
COLLECTIVE PRESENTS

FESTIVALS OF LIGHT



A CELEBRATION OF TRADITIONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

NOVEMBER } 7TH } 7:00PM
 } 8TH } 2:00PM

Info and tickets at
www.peacethroughdance.org

FOLK DANCE MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2025

In October 1945 (exactly 80 years ago), Federation past-president Clarice Dechant collected data about the people who made up the dance community by distributing a survey at a festival in San Francisco. It was not unusual for 500 or more dancers to attend one of the monthly dance events in the San Francisco Bay area, so it is notable that about 25% of the surveys were returned. Clarice presented the results of her survey in the January 1946 issue of *Let's Dance!* If you want to read her entire report, it was reprinted in the November 2024 issue (available on folkdance.com).

In brief:

- 27% married women 20% married men
26% single women 21% single men 3% divorced (men/women)
- Average age: women – 22 men – 34
- Occupations (more than one): clerk, engineer, educator, chemist, secretary, carpenter, accountant.
- 91% of women and 84% of men were native-born (26 states); 50% had native-born parents.
- 41% owned their home.
- 71% of men and 50% of women danced more than once a week.
70% of men and 62% of women attended festivals once a month.
- 14% had danced for less than one year; 11% had danced for more than five years.
- Most said “word of mouth” got them started, followed by public demonstrations and festivals.
- 95% reported dancing “for the joy of it.”
- After dancing, outdoor activities ranked second, followed by music appreciation.

The Federation Board thought it would be an interesting project to survey the current dancing population and see what we look like now. We are well aware we are much older, but we don't really know much beyond that.

There is no record of the survey questions themselves, but we extrapolated them from the results. (There was a question about family income; it was dropped.)

1. **Gender**
2. **Marital status**
3. **Occupation (if retired, former)**
4. **Age**
5. **Birthplace**
6. **Birthplace of parents (country)**
7. **Birthplace of grandparents (country)**
8. **Rent or own?**
9. **Frequency of dance activity (average)**
10. **Frequency of attendance at special events (average)**
11. **How long have you been folk dancing?**
12. **How did you find folk dancing? (short answer)**
13. **Other hobbies/interests**
14. **Why do you folk dance? (short answer)**

How to participate in this survey:

- Go to folkdance.com/survey2025 and fill in your answers on the form provided.
--OR--
- Write your responses to the questions on the left and email them to editor@folkdance.com.
--OR--
- Print out your answers and mail them to Editor, 153 Race Street, San Jose, CA 95126.
--OR--
- A hard copy of the questions will be available at the Officers Ball on Saturday, October 4. You can complete the survey and either turn it in there or mail it to the address above.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE BAY...

RAZZMATAZZ – Marilyn Smith

Fall folk dance classes started again September 2 at Monroe Hall in Santa Rosa. This fall I'll be teaching many Yves Moreau dances from the past in our intermediate class. Marina Troost will teach dances from Portugal, Bulgaria, and Ukraine, and Andy Toplarski will teach a Croatian dance.

Two of our dancers, Cliff Ives and Rebecca Dwan, have **launched a "Learn the Words" campaign** to help us sing along to our favorite dance tunes. Starting with Jovano Jovanke, they have distributed words and music to the group and created a pocket binder for copies to use on Tuesday nights.

The last Tuesday of every month we have an all-request night with a review of a few dances previously taught. It's also our refreshment night in the dining room, providing us with a wonderful time for socializing.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Our Holiday Party will be on **Saturday, December 13**, 7-10 pm.

BERKELEY FOLK DANCERS – Carol Hayden

Berkeley Folk Dancers were so busy in September! **First, our classes started up again after taking off the month of August.** We offer six classes per week plus a request night every Friday. That means **there are two classes for beginners** – one in the afternoon and one at night – so there can be no excuses if you're trying to convince someone to join our community. We're off to a great start, especially with the Thursday night class for beginners. Last week there were 31 dancers, of whom 10 were brand new!

Next, we danced and invited the public to join us at **The Solano Stroll on Sunday, September 14.** Most of us wore our new BFD t-shirts, and we looked great! We are always hopeful that a few participants will be interested enough to join one of our classes. It has happened before.

Then our **Inaugural Ball** (affectionately called the I-Ball) was **September 20**, when we thanked the officers who were leaving, and welcomed our new officers.

Finally, depending on when you are reading this, long-time BFD members **David and Marija Hillis** will either have *already celebrated* or *will be*

celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary on September 27 with a picnic and dancing in our club's dance hall at the recreation center in Live Oak Park.

EAST BAY FOLK DANCERS – Marion Snyderman

Our group is hosting **Bulgarika for an evening of dance to live music on Friday, October 17.** We hope you will join us at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 401 Highland Avenue, Piedmont at 7:30 pm.

NORTH BAY – Carol Friedman

Our fall session in Petaluma at Hermann Sons Hall meets every Monday through December 15.

I've been having fun going through my music files, and I found several dances that I've bringing back this fall including Malhão, from Portugal. Previously, I choreographed a dance to Oj, Jake ze bulo izpferzdy vika, a Ukrainian song by Kitka. During the summer, someone who dances with me regularly sent me a wonderful Bosnian song by Kitka – Tjerai, Mala Ovce Preko Brega – and I have choreographed a dance for this as well. This inspired me to bring back another dance from Bosnia that I choreographed, Oildo Mi Novia.

As always, we'll be dancing to old favorites and requests. **We will be hosting live music with Bulgarika on October 20!**

Come join us any time!

TURLOCK VILLAGE DANCERS – Judy Kropp

The Village Dancers are back dancing on Friday nights at the Carnegie Arts Center after taking off most of the summer. We'll be there every Friday until June except the Friday after Thanksgiving and the Friday after Christmas.

The Village Dancers took time out of their travels this summer to meet on July 5 in Cortez, a small Central Valley town that was settled by Japanese farmers generations ago. Many other local people are involved with this community, and in July we joined them celebrating their **Obon Festival in a Buddhist satellite church of Stockton.** Taiko drums entertained us, and members dancing with fans or scarves taught us new dances. The favorite was Yakyuken Matsuyama, or the Baseball Ondo.

Then we met in August for lunch at a Hughson Chinese Restaurant to celebrate a few birthdays and catch up on each others' news.

... AND BEYOND

On September 6 several of us went to the **Greek Festival at St. Basil's Greek Orthodox Church** (where Cristian and Sonya were married during Stockton Folk Dance Camp). Several hundred people met to celebrate all things Greek. There was so much wonderful food and lots of dancing. Yes, the weather was hot, but we soon got lost in the Greek music. Little children ran through the lines of dancers doing a Syrtos, Pentozali and others.

I like to encourage our dancers to join in any ethnic dancing in your area so they can get the feeling for the dances. Little by little these festivals are disappearing.

I'll will be one of the teachers at the Officers Ball on October 4, and I hope to bring a carload or two of our members with me. See you there!

It's a few months away, but our group will be performing at Fellowship Home in Modesto the afternoon of December 5. I will share some photos when that happens.



From left, Rick Henderson, Nancy Gerston, Bente Larsen, and Ray Sundby.

PENINSULA COUNCIL – Clem Dickey

Roberto Bagnoli dropped by Saratoga Folk Dancers in August to teach Ehun Alargunen Dantza (Basque), Dola Moj Dola (Albania) and Čičina (Bulgaria). The **Palomanians have also picked up Dola Moj Dola**, as well as several dances from Stockton Camp: La Nuntă (Romania), Kolomijki (Ukraine), Ropoțelul (Bucovina), and Kapok from Łowicz (Poland).

The refurbished deck at The Land was in fine shape for Labor Day weekend, but late Saturday night an impressive amount of dark illustrated just how long the battery power supply can last: not quite long enough to finish Debka Ramot. The generator restored power a few minutes later but by that time the music computer, having its own battery, had moved on. We shall have to finish Ramot on Memorial Day.

The Saratoga Folk Dancers don't just embrace a party theme; they revel in it! **The Citrus Celebration filled the dance hall with color** – from palest lime to blood orange red, and so many shades of lemon yellow and grapefruit pink!

Beth and Isaac Berezovsky would have won the prize had there been one. Beth used double-stick tape to adhere small plastic fruit slices to their shirts. They have a large collection of plastic food that accompanies the child-sized play kitchen they purchased for their grandchildren. Clever idea! (See The Family Photo Album on p. 6.)

Even the refreshments table demonstrated their dedication to the theme: several varieties of lemon cookies, candy orange fruit slices, key-lime pie squares, green figs, and green grapes.

The Saratoga Folk Dancers' next party will be a **Halloween party on Thursday, October 30**.

continued on p. 18.



News From Around the Bay – *continued*

CHICO WORLD DANCERS

We are making great strides preparing for **Statewide June 12-14, 2026, in Chico!** We have two master dance teachers, a master music teacher, and the band lined up. See p. 25 for more details. We will be releasing our registration form soon. Watch for the early-bird pricing that will allow you to save \$60 on the full package if you register before January 31.

In anticipation of having fellow folk dancers coming to Chico in June, **Chico World Dancers are quickly becoming new members of the Folk Dance Federation** – six last month and one more this month. With Chico only about three hours from many locations in the San Francisco Bay area, we would love to see some folk dancers carpool up to Chico on a Sunday morning to join us for dancing. **Drive up in the morning, have lunch, and come dance with us!** See the ad on p. 19 for details.

SAN FRANCISCO GROUPS – *Linda Milhoan*

Lots to report from San Francisco! Nineteen members of Changs attended Stockton Folk Dance Camp in July! We learned lots of new dances (and re-learned old ones) at the final Camp held at the University of the Pacific in Stockton.

When the odd fifth Friday shows up, we usually plan something special, and the next one is **October 31**. So, dress up (or don't) and join us on **Halloween!** On **November 21**, we'll dance to the wonderful music of our friends **Da! Mozhem**.

Join us for another Changs event when we'll start the new year **learning Salsa Rueda** taught by veteran dance teacher and Changs member Jeanne-Marie Hughes. We celebrated our longest-standing member, Thad Trela, who had a very special birthday on September 22!

San Francisco Dance Circle has returned to Harvey Milk Center for the Arts in Duboce Park, after dancing at our summer venue in Noe Valley.

GREATER SACRAMENTO AREA – *Mary Victor*

Our Greater Sacramento area extends from Chico in the north, through Davis and Sacramento, south to Modesto/Turlock, and east to the Sierra Foothills all the way to Reno. We have so much dancing going on seven days a week, and not just dance classes (international, contras, squares), but exhibition groups, bands, and singing classes too.

See folkdancersac.org for a full list including how to contact for details.

MONDAY

Horos (Sacramento). Intermediate and advanced, mostly non-partner Balkan. 7:30-9:30 pm. Sierra 2 Center, 2791 24th Street.

TUESDAY

International Folk Dancing (Davis). Easy-to-learn folk dances. No partner is needed. 11 am-noon. Senior Center, 646 A Street.

El Dorado International Dance (Shingle Springs). 7:30-9:30 pm. 3100 Ponderosa Road.

WEDNESDAY

Kolo Koalition (Sacramento). Intermediate and advanced, international, non-partner. 7:30-9:30 pm. YLI Hall, 1400 27th Street.

Village Dancers Of The Valley. All levels, partner and non-partner. 7:30-9:30 pm.

THURSDAY

Folk Dance Class for Exercise & Fun (Sacramento) Easy international folk dances. No partners needed. 11 am-1 pm. Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento, 2425 Sierra Boulevard.

Chico World Dancers (Chico). Beginning and intermediate international. 7-8:30 pm. 2320 North Avenue.

Reno International Folk Dance Co-Op (Reno). International, non-partner, partner. 7-9 pm. Temple Sinai, 3405 Gulling.

FRIDAY

Sacramento Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. Beginners welcome, ages 7 and up. 7 pm, YLI Hall, 1400 27th Street.

Village Dancers of the Valley (Turlock). Beginning and intermediate international. 7:30-9:30 pm. Carnegie Arts Center, 250 N. Broadway.

SATURDAY

Sacramento Country Dance Society-Contra Dance. Live Music! Fourth Saturday of the month. All levels, all dances taught. 7-10 pm. Coloma Community Center, 4623 T Street.

SUNDAY

Chico World Dance (Chico). Beginning and intermediate international folk dance. 2-4 pm. Chico Creek Dance Centre, 1144 West First Street.

Dances of the World (Sacramento). Second and fourth Sunday. International. 2-5 pm. YLI Hall, 1400 27th Street.

Sacramento Country Dance Society-English Country Dance. Live Music! First and third Sundays of the month. 1:3-5 pm. First Sunday: Masonic Lodge, 235 Vernon St, Roseville. Third Sundays: YLI Hall, 1400 27th Street.

Davis International Folk Dancers. All levels. Mostly non-partner Balkan and international. 7-9:30 pm. Mirror Image Dance Studio, 2121 2nd Street.



World Dance

Chico Creek Dance

1144 W. 1st Street

Chico, Ca

Grow your dance!

Sundays

1pm Teaching

2-4pm Dancing

Lines, Circle &

Couple dancing

Open to all

Suggested \$5 donation

Redwood Tree 1-17-25

Bonnie



SPEAKING OF DANCING

by Gigi Jensen

The Dragon, The Lion, and the Dancing Grannies

When our Dancing with Friends team is programming the dances for any Monday, we like to include a dance from Asia. What has been difficult to find are Chinese dances. We lead Lisu 7 (from the Lisu people of China) and High Green Mountain (choreographed by France Bourque-Moreau). Recently we've added Diu Xie from Tibet.

When Steve Kotansky taught a particular Chinese dance in Calgary 2017, he dubbed the dance Lisu 7 after the people and the number of counts per measure. No one knew what the dance is really called. I looked on a few Chinese Internet platforms with the help of Google Translate and was able find that specific song used in a different choreography. I sent a video link of us dancing Lisu 7 to a friend, David Lei, who has extensive experience in Asian dances. Here are his thoughts.



“Almost every small tourist village in China had the local seniors dressed in local costumes perform such circle dances in the town square for tourists. These dances were similar for all the villages I visited by various local ethnic groups except the costumes were different. I cannot tell if your YouTube dance is Lisu. These are such simple steps that I consider it to be a universal group circle dance from anywhere.”

A side note: If you want to find out more about the Lisu, search for “Lisu” on Facebook and various groups will pop up. Many of the costume photos are stunning.

I've continued looking for more Chinese folk dances in the U.S. folkdance community. On Stockton Folk Dance Camp's website, there are a few listed across the years. Most are Taiwanese. If you know of something, please send me an email.

Having lived in cities that have large Chinese communities (Seattle and San Francisco), I had the good fortune several times to see the Lion Dance and Dragon Dance. I never really thought about what I was seeing, other than the festive nature of both. David Lei explained the traditions:

“Northern lions look like lions and perform as entertainment. Southern or Cantonese lions, which are what we usually see in America, are a recent invention started around 1850 as a branch of Cantonese opera. The Cantonese lion is a hybrid animal with a horn, decorated with pompoms with two large ones near the eyes representing an extra pair of eyes. It has fangs and a huge mouth with a large tongue – all symbolic of a shaman to communicate with the other world. It was a ceremonial dance until the late 1980s when the dance transitioned to acrobatic entertainment, often performed on high posts 10 feet in the air.”

If you are interested in knowing more about the Chinese Lion Dance, search for David Lei's lectures and presentations online.

The Dragon Dance is a big thing. Literally. There can be as many as 100 dancers underneath holding poles which carry the lightweight dragon's body and head. They run through the streets during parades. There are more than 700 different dragon dances in China. For those who don't know, dragons in China symbolize good luck, power, and authority, and bring rain. In Western culture, they are greedy for gold and eat damsels in distress.

I figured out pretty quickly that trying to understand Chinese dance is a tall order. After reading several articles, here are some of my conclusions.

- It's pretty difficult to summarize 6,000 years of any country's dance.
- The earliest Chinese character for “dance” is a representation of a dancer holding oxtails found in oracle bone writings dating about 3,200 years ago. A shaman used dancing as part of their rituals and would incorporate increasingly complex dances/drama in order to impress the audience.
- People in power often appropriate dance and music genres to support their political positions, including both emperors and Communists.
- Exercise and dance can be one and the same. For something fun, look on YouTube for the Chinese school principal dancing the “shuffle dance” with the children in the exercise yard.

- Seniors are often seen dancing in parks. A relatively recent phenomenon is the problem with “dancing grannies,” older women, estimated to number some 100 million, who dance in the streets while blasting music. It’s become a problem for younger people who need to work or study. Objects are thrown at the dancers, including water balloons and less savory items. Police are reluctant to cite the dancers for breaking noise restrictions. The Guardian has an interesting story about this titled “China’s Noisy ‘Dancing Grannies’ Silenced by Device that Disables Speakers”.
- Ballroom made it big back in the 1940s, then was suppressed by the Cultural Revolution, and now is popular again. It’s a favorite for weddings. Many of the Argentine tango senior center students that my husband and I taught were Chinese and Taiwanese.
- New Yangge is a popular dance style from Northern China. It is improvisational so, if you can swing a handkerchief while waving a fan in time to the beat, you can join in the fun.
- There are 56 recognized ethnic groups in China, and each has its dances. That’s a lot of folk dancing.
- Classical ballet began with the Beijing Dance School and the renowned ballet dancer Dai Ailian in 1954. A side note: Years ago, I met the Chinese ballet star, Li Cunxin, who defected from China in 1981. He was in San Francisco promoting his autobiography, *Mao’s Last Dancer*. It’s a good example of how politics can influence the arts, and people can overcome obstacles in order to dance.
- Contemporary dance in China was slow to take shape but finally flourished after the government’s Open Door Policy in 1978 through cultural exchanges with Western dance companies (think Martha Graham and Alvin Ailey).
- Hip hop, jazz, tap, tango, and other modern dance genres are popular but sometimes come with restrictions to align with government moral policies.

So where does this leave me? Wanting more.

I will take this opportunity to thank my guest collaborator, David Lei. I met David when I worked at the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival in 2003. I’m honored to have his help with this month’s column. David has a passion for building communities, social changes/improvements, youth education and the arts. He works with the Chinese Performing Arts Foundation, Asian Art Museum, The Chinese American Community Fund, Chung Ngai Dance Troupe, Academy of Chinese Performing Arts, World Arts West – San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, the Bancroft Library, and the Center for Asian American Media.

As always, your thoughts, feedback, and questions are welcome. Email me at gigi@tangoandmoredance.com.



Results of the Stockton Folk Dance Camp Survey of Dances

by Lon Radin, Federation Institutes Chair

If you are considering dances to teach at your dance group, these were the favorites of the dancers who attended Stockton Folk Dance Camp in July.

Just over 50 surveys (paper and online) were returned. The Federation’s Research Committee hopes to write up several of these dances in future issues of *Let’s Dance!* magazine.

<u>Dance name</u>	<u>Votes</u>
La nuntă	31
Kolomijki	29
Arnold’s Circle	26
Joc din Jina	26
Ropoțelul	25
Hegi	24
Bobocica	24
Duško Moje	23
Aromân Sirto	23
Hora din Vețelu	23
Karčmaročka	22
Zoriuszka	21

FROM THE *LET'S DANCE!* PHOTO ARCHIVES



Can you identify all four men in the line? The third person who sends the correct answer to either loui@louisutucker.com or editor@folkdance.com wins a \$25 gift card.

WE HAVE A WINNER!



I was born in Hatch, New Mexico, and grew up in the small town of Oakridge, Oregon, the youngest of three children. Our school district had a wonderful choral and instrumental music program. I've always enjoyed singing and moving to music, and I started square dancing in third grade. My older sister and I had fun singing and dancing together. She became a cheerleader in high school, and I followed in her footsteps.

At the University of Oregon I majored in Spanish. I volunteered with the International Studies Center and dreamed of traveling all over the world. For one of my physical education requirements, I took an international folk dance class and loved it. I only took that one folk dance class, but I knew folk dance was something I wanted to do again.

After graduation I got to fulfill my travel dream working for Pan American Airways and traveling around the world for the next 16 years. The downside was that I didn't have a regular enough schedule to make time for folk dancing. When my daughter started elementary school, I left my flying career, went to graduate school, and then taught ESL at City College San Francisco (CCSF).

A friend I had met at my daughter's elementary school had been a ballet dancer, and she and I decided to take a tap class at CCSF. That class opened up a whole world of dancing for me. Pam and I took a couple of tap classes, and we performed at some CCSF events. Later we enrolled in the international folk dance class taught by Gail Barton. In our first class with Gail, she asked us if we had ever done folk dancing, and if so, when? Several of us said we had first folk danced 20 or 30 years before, and we were finally getting back to it. She said it wasn't unusual to have this gap and then start up again. Gail was a super teacher, and she encouraged us to be in her performing group. She also encouraged us to go to Stockton Folk Dance Camp. We did, and we were hooked!

In the last issue



The photo above shows dancers at Stockton Camp dancing Sobótki, a Polish dance taught by Richard Schmidt in July (and in 2012). There were a few people who suggested the dance is Bielolitsa Kruglolitsa, a dance taught by Alexandru David, but in that dance the same handhold is done counter-clockwise instead of clockwise.

And the winner? **Linda Milhoan was the third person** with the correct answer, so she received a \$25 gift card and the story of her dance life is below.

At City College we heard about Changs International Folk Dancers, and were encouraged to join the club. I served as co-president for a few years. I've attended Stockton Camp for more than 20 years and have learned a lot about teaching dance from the excellent teachers I've observed and learned from. Now I am part of a team of five volunteers who teach a weekly class at San Francisco Recreation and Parks.

Folk dancing has become a regular and essential part of my life, and I treasure the many friends I've made through this wonderful activity!

Exploring Teaching Strategies for Folk Dance

Presented by The Mentoring Project and the National Folk Organization
NFO F.O.L.K. Chat
Panel Discussion

Saturday, November 1, 10 am PST



This virtual presentation will explore folk dance teaching methods that support both experienced and emerging teachers.

Panel:

Bruce Hamilton, California
Sue Hulsether, Wisconsin
France Bourque-Moreau, Quebec

***** ON ZOOM *****

Zoom link will be available mid-October.
See nfo-usa.org/nfo_folk_chats

The committee invites the public to suggest discussion topics or request more information at NFO.Mentoring.Group@gmail.com.

IT'S TIME TO DANCE

by **Connor Oliver**

Chico, California

In an ancient land of rising mists, between mountains and valleys a village sits, and in the village square activity begins.

Chickens are shooed, yards are swept, goats are penned, the tributary roads and walkways and paths fill in.

People in carts, donkeys and families on foot, laughter and excitement build as all converge.

It could be a wedding, a funeral, a festival, a birthday or a seasonal passing; whatever the cause it is a time well served.

Soon colorful skirts with embroidered aprons emerge, tailored vests, bright scarves, and blouses covered in treasured necklaces.

Grandmas and aunties fuss and tut and comment over the placement of clothes which brighten the event.

Groups of singers magically appear to sing songs in nasal and throaty tones in syncopated rhythms and offset beats.

These rhythmic accents of strong and weak emerge with tupans, two sided drums whose thick and thin drum sticks invoke the exciting and energetic tunes of time gone by.

Soon the lifting notes of gaidas join with the birdlike trills of the kaval, merging with the vibrating strings of tamburas and gadulkas, all combining to ignite a collective sigh.

Spontaneously people connect, holding hands or shoulders or little fingers or belts, joyously grinning, taking it all in at a glance.

The people all about – musicians, singers, and dancers – all mentally shout:

"It is time to dance!"

Officers Ball 2025 FUN-ding the Future

50/50 Raffle

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Veterans Hall, 302 Main Street, Pleasanton

FEATURING INSTITUTE TEACHERS:

Adony Beniares	Čapkan Dimčo	Macedonian	non-partner
Craig Blackstone	Fjaskern	Swedish	partner mixer
Marija Hillis	Three's a Crowd	U.S.	trio-mixer
Judy Kropp	Bridge of Athlone	Scottish	set
Lothar Narins	Karkmarocka	Rusyan	non-partner
Alan Rothchild	Hora Vrânceana	Romanian	non-partner

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!

Because of a matching grant, all donations made at or before the end of the Officers Ball that are designated for scholarships will be doubled. Donate online at folkdance.com/donate, or bring cash or a check to the Officers Ball.

OPTIONS FOR PAYMENT:

1. Pay online at <http://officersball.folkdance.com>
2. Mail check and form to Sabine Zappe, 153 Race Street, San Jose, CA 95126

Questions? Contact Loui@Louitucker.com

Doors open at 1:00
Institute 1:30-5:30
On-site Dinner 5:30-7:00
Dance Party 7:00-10:00

Officers Ball 2025 Registration Form

Name(s): _____ Email: _____

PRE-REGISTRATION for the entire Officers Ball (by Sept 30):

\$55 PACKAGE (Workshop, dinner & evening party) X__ = \$ _____

\$25 workshop X__ = \$ _____

\$20 dinner X__ = \$ _____

\$25 evening party X__ = \$ _____

* \$5 2026 Folk Dance Federation Wall Calendar X__ = \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Any dietary issues we should know about? _____

STATEWIDE 2026 – JUNE 12-14 MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND PLAN TO ATTEND!

by Memo Keswick

The next California Folk Dance Federation Statewide 2026 will happen on **June 12-14 in Chico**. Save the date! More information will be available soon at folkdance.com.

This festival will feature two master dance teachers, one Turkish and one Bulgarian, as well as a master Bulgarian music teacher. Music classes will be held simultaneously with a dance class. The house band will be Da! Mozhem. The festival will feature a variety of partner and non-partner dancing.

The Turkish dance teacher will be **AHMET LÜLECI**. A native of Turkey, Ahmet is an accomplished choreographer, dance teacher, and performer as well as a researcher of Anatolian culture. He is currently the artistic director of the Boston-based



Collage Dance Ensemble, which allows him to further his goal of making folk dance and music accessible to a wider audience. Since arriving in North America in 1985, he has taught throughout the United States as well as Canada, Japan, Taiwan,

Hong Kong, the Netherlands, England, Switzerland, Brazil, Argentina, Germany, Norway, Italy, Spain and Australia.

The Bulgarian dance teacher will be **KONSTANIN “KOTSE” MARINOV**, from Stara Zagora, Bulgaria.

Kotse was born into a dancing family and performed with the Children’s and Youth Ensemble Zagorche from the age of 5. His father is a choreographer and a long-time soloist of the Military Ensemble in Sofia. His mother dances with the Zagore ensemble. Kotse entered the State Choreographic School in 1987. After he



graduated and completed his military service, he was a soloist with Zagore and the Sunny Beach Ensemble; he toured with both Sunny Beach and Zagore in Europe, Canada, and the US.

The Bulgarian music teacher will be **PETER ALEKSIEV**. Peter was born in Varna, Bulgaria. He graduated from Philip Kutev Music School in Kotel, then from Plovdiv’s Academy for Music and Dance Arts. He was part of the representative folk orchestra of the Plovdiv Academy. There he received his master’s degree in music arts, specializing in bagpipe.

While he was at school, Peter accompanied the world-known Grammy-winning women’s choir Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares. He has participated in many groups and has played with the most



famous musicians and bands in Bulgaria. He has made recordings with the Bulgarian National Radio and Bulgarian National Television, and has participated in many international projects, folklore events, and festivals in Greece, Italy, Malta, Israel, Netherlands, Belgium, Moldova, Ukraine, Serbia, and elsewhere.

Plan to attend and experience these three exciting artists. In the coming months there will be more information about other activities planned for Statewide.

A Statewide Festival has been held every year since 1946, except during the COVID pandemic in 2020 and 2021. All Festivals have been in California except 2001 when it was held in Las Vegas.

TURKEY May 6th – 22nd and ARMENIA May 23-June 8 (tentative dates) in 2026
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Join Ahmet Demirbagh and Tineke and Maurits van Geel, your dedicated tour leaders and experts for these vibrant dance and culture tours. They will be guiding you through rich traditions, dance classes, cultural treasures, and breathtaking landscapes. Direct flights from Istanbul to Yerevan make exploring both countries easy. Tours can also be booked separately. Detailed program available autumn 2025. Want to secure your spot early? Pre-register now and be the first to receive detailed updates and booking opportunities:

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BULGARIKA



BULGARIKA
2025 USA tour

Sunday,
OCT. 19, 2025
2pm-4:30pm

Doors open at 1:30pm

\$15

\$7/students (kids free w/ supervision)

Live Bulgarian Folk Dance Party

Kopachka Folk Dancers

Strawberry Recreation Center, 118 E. Strawberry Dr, Mill Valley

Bulgarika is a unique folklore band playing traditional music from all the Bulgarian regions. **Nikolay Kolev** and **Donka Koleva** have invited two extraordinary musicians to join them for the 2025 tour: **Stoyan Kostov** on tambura and **Anton Shekerjiev** on tapan and kaba gaida.

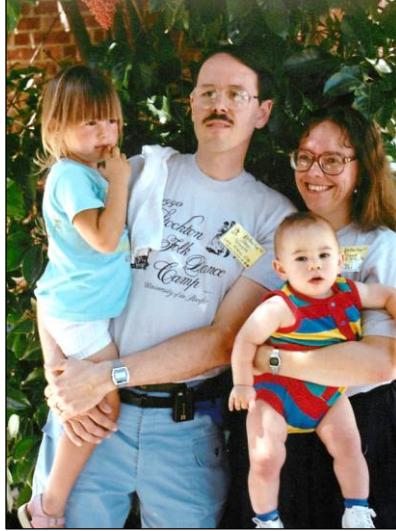
Free parking at Strawberry & on streets at entry and behind. Refreshments provided. Vax/boosters highly encouraged, mask required if not (N95, KN95, KF94—we can provide).
Info: Kopachkafolkdancers.com Email: president@kopachkafolkdancers.com

www.kopachkafolkdancers.com

Congratulations! Dave and Joyce Ugglas' 50th Anniversary Celebration

Fiftieth wedding anniversaries are not common, and they are very much worth celebrating. Dave and Joyce met in the early 1970s at a singles event at Joyce's church and they were married in August of 1975. They have been active and avid folk dancers for over 50 years, and their two children, Linnea and Jordan, have also spent time on dance floors. Both Dave and Joyce were on the Stockton Board of Directors and Joyce has worked on the Stockton syllabus since the late 1980s.

It should be noted that this special celebration happened on Al and Teddy Wolterbeeks' deck at the back of their property in Shingle Springs, in the Sierra Foothills east of Sacramento. Their deck has been the site of many folk dance-related events. The Sacramento International Folk Dance and Arts Council (SIFDAC) held several events there. In 2008, the installation of the new Folk Dance Federation officers took place there. Several of Al and Teddy Wolterbeeks' young folk dancers who met in their Dance Barn were married on the deck, including Megan Wolf and the Ugglas' son Jordan, both of whom attended the celebration in September.



Then and Now. The photo on the left was taken by George Milton at the 1990 Stockton Folk Dance Camp, when Jordan was about a year old. The photo on the right was taken by Loui Tucker at the anniversary celebration in September 2025 at Al and Teddy Wolterbeeks' deck in Shingle Springs.

Save the Date!

Statewide 2026
June 12-14, Chico, CA

Special Guest Artists:
Ahmet Lüleci - Turkish Dance
"Kotse" Marinov - Bulgarian Dance
Peter Aleksiev - Bulgarian Music
Da! Mozhem - Dance Band

Registration materials will be available soon at
folkdance.com

Fall Camp

Oct. 31 – Nov. 2, 2025

with Catherine Rudin presenting an eclectic mix of classic and new dances

Dance in a beautiful climate-controlled room, located in a tranquil, park-like setting. Enjoy teaching and review sessions, evening dance parties, and other activities. The weekend includes 5 meals (Friday dinner through Sunday breakfast), snacks, and two nights in motel-style rooms (with heating and air conditioning, private bath, bedding, and towels). **Space is limited. Register soon!**

Fall Camp is at the Brandeis-Bardin Campus of the American Jewish University, 1101 Peppertree Lane, Brandeis, CA 93064. (It is near Simi Valley in Southern California, just south of the 118 Freeway.)

Prices this year are lower for double and triple occupancy, and all prices are again subsidized by the Folk Dance Federation of California, South.

Single room	\$540
Double room	\$440 per person
Triple room	\$395 per person
Commuter (No room, 5 meals)	\$270 per person

Please enter an amount from above \$_____ *One form per person*

Sunday lunch \$ 27 \$_____

Please consider an **entirely optional donation** to help keep our prices affordable \$_____

Total Enclosed: \$_____

Refund policy: You may cancel until Oct. 6 for a full refund. We can't guarantee full refunds after then.

First name (for your badge) _____ Last name _____

Email _____ Phone(s) _____

Address _____

Name(s) of roommate(s) _____

We will try to accommodate special dietary requirements _____

Emergency contact (name & phone) _____

The Federation requires campers to sign a General Liability waiver, which is available on FallCamp.org
If you have already signed that waiver for another Federation event, check here: []

Please complete a separate **registration form** (and waiver if needed) for each camper. Make your check payable to **Folk Dance Federation of CA, South**, and mail it with your form(s) and waivers (if needed) to:

Mindy Belli 321 S Vista del Canon, Anaheim, CA 92807

Questions not answered here or on FallCamp.org? Email Mindy at DanceFallCamp@gmail.com.

Zoriuszka

(Slovakia)

Zoriuszka (Zoh-ree-USH-kah) was introduced by Andy Taylor at Stockton Folk Dance Camp in the summer of 2025. It is a quiet women’s dance that Johann Prutyňjak learned from watching his grandmother dance it at special occasions in the Lemko and Prešov Rusyn regions in the borderlands between what is now Ukraine, Poland, and Slovakia (green dot map). Johann was born in the Hutzal region of Slovakia in the 1800s and learned these dances as a young man and passed them down through his family. Andy Taylor learned this dance from Johann Prutyňjak’s grandson, Mike Protenic, who arranged the steps to fit this music.



This dance is done to an old Slavic song which dates back to medieval times and is similar to some choral songs from this region. It includes elements of Slovak and Ukrainian song style, where reverb from other mountains comes back. There are many versions of the song available on the internet, but this dance fits a specific version.

- Music:** 4/4 meter *Triglav* from Szczecin in Poland (igor.gorewicz@gmail.com) or contact Andy Taylor at ataydance@gmail.com.
- Video:** A video was made at Stockton Folk Dance Camp and will be available in the fall of 2025. Contact someone who attended the Camp who is willing to share the video.
- Formation:** Circle, facing center. In Fig I, there is special back basket hold in which L arm in under R, and NOT holding hands in back. Hands are on each neighbor’s back.
- Steps & Styling:**
- Up Rida: Facing ctr, step on ball of R to R (ct 1); step L on full foot in front of R (ct &); repeat. Can be done with opp ftwk and direction. The rise and fall are subtle.
 - Ball-Flat Rotation: Step on ball of R behind L (ct 1); step L with a flat foot in front of R, making a quarter rotation CW (ct &); repeat three times. The R ft remains on the same spot during the rotation. This is the same footwork as the Up Rida, but rotating around the ball of the ft. Can be done with opp ftwk and direction.
 - Heel-Roll: Step fwd R on heel (ct 1); roll fwd onto the full foot (ct &); heavy step L fwd. Can be done with opp ftwk.

Meas	4/4 meter	PATTERN
4 meas.	INTRODUCTION. During male vocal and first phrase, slight sway R and L in place.	
I.	SPECIAL BACK BASKET HOLD (see description above).	
1	Step R to R (ct 1); step L beside R (ct 2); repeat cts 1 and 2 (cts 3-4).	
2	Moving sideways R, step R bkwd (ct 1); step L fwd and slightly crossed in front of R (ct 2); repeat cts 1-2 (cts 3-4).	
3	Four Up Ridas to R (cts 1, &, 2, &, 3, &, 4, &).	
4	Step R to R (ct 1); touch L beside R (ct 2); step L to L (ct 3); step R next to L (ct 4).	

Zoriuszka – continued

- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4 with opp ftwk and direction.
9-16 Repeat meas 1-8.
- II. BACKING UP TO V-POSITION, THEN CCW AND CW.
- 1 Step R bkwd (ct 1); step L beside R (ct 2); repeats cts 1-2, arms lowering to V-pos (cts 3-4).
2-3 Repeat Fig I, meas 2-3 (in-and-out, Rida steps).
4 Facing CCW, step R fwd (ct 1); touch L beside R (ct 2); step fwd L (ct 3); touch R beside L (ct 4).
5 Two R Heel-Rolls moving fwd.
6 Facing R, four steps fwd with slight sways in and out (cts 1-4).
7 Repeat meas 3 (Up Rida steps).
8 Facing ctr, step R to R (ct 1); touch L next to R (ct 2); step L facing L (ct 3); step R beside L (ct 4).
9-11 Repeat meas 5-7 with opp ftwk and direction (L-Heel-Rolls, walking, Up Ridas).
12 Step L fwd (ct 1); touch R next to L (ct 2); repeat cts 1-2 with opp ftwk in the same direction.
13-15 Repeat meas 9-11 (L Heel-Rolls, walking, Up Ridas).
16 Step L facing ctr (ct 1); touch R beside L (ct 2); step R to R (ct 3); step L beside R (ct 4).
- III. IN AND OUT WITH BALL-FLAT ROTATION. Hands in fists on hips.
- 1 Two R Heel-Rolls moving twd ctr.
2 Beg R, four steps, swaying slightly R and L, while backing out from ctr (cts 1-4).
3 4 Ball-Flat Rotation steps beg R to end facing ctr.
4 Facing ctr, step R to R (ct 1); touch L beside R (ct 2); step L to L (ct 3); step R next to L.
5-8 Repeat meas 1-4 with opp ftwk (L Heel-Rolls, backing up, Ball-Flat Rotation).

Sequence: The dance is done once as described above.



Zoriuszka, showing the special back basket hold in Fig I.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

Below are advertisements that appeared in *Let's Dance!* at a time when the magazine had about 5,000 subscribers.

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July-August 1974

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~ unknown author

advertisement



Folk Dance Scene

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