

NFO NEWS

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September
2015

IT NEVER GETS OLD!

Barbara Bevan, Sacramento, California

I'm talking about Stockton Folk Dance Camp, of course. It's one of the oldest folk dance events in the United States, having just completed its 68th consecutive camp. I have just finished my 38th consecutive year, and I have already signed-up for two weeks next year. What is it that makes this such a special experience? It's the dancing, the music, the superb teachers, the singing, the friends many of whom I only see at Camp once a year, the experience of getting to know other dancers from other states and countries, the laughter, the surprises, the sharing of ideas, trying new dance forms, and so much more.

This year the 2015 Stockton Folk Dance Camp was especially wonderful (I know, I say that every year because each year is different). I learned Albanian dances from a real Albanian, Genci Kastrati. I have learned Albanian dances before from Janet Reineck, Lee Otterholt, and Steve Kotansky, but Genci is the real thing! He is charming, delightful, and taught very interesting dances with a special style I have not seen before. I hope he will come back often.

Željko Jergan shared his love of Croatian dances with his charm and passion. His knowledge of his culture and his singing enriched our experience. Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion taught delightful Romanian dances with their humor and expertise. Never a dull moment with them! This was their 5th wedding anniversary, and many of us attended their wedding here in Stockton in 2010.

I tried Salsa Rueda with Cesar Garfiaz. It is really fun, and he is a very nice, friendly, and talented guy. His performances in the talent show were awesome!

Although I don't usually do couple dances, I enjoyed getting to know Kay Munn who taught Scottish dances. She speaks with a charming Scottish accent and loves to laugh. I had fun getting to know Götz and Gabi Zinser from Germany. They brought their two children, Laura and Max, and this was the first time in the US for the family. Having lived in Germany for three years, I enjoyed trying to converse with them.

Nils Fredland is a dynamic teacher of singing, contras, and squares. The singing class was a new experience for many of us. He was able to teach us complex arrangements in four-part harmony in an amazing short period of time.

(continued on Page 11)



The author with Željko Jergan

PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Ed Austin, Provo, Utah

This summer has offered an abundance of opportunity folk dance enthusiasts in the form of camps, workshops, symposiums, international festivals, and cruises and tours. I hope that many of you were able to participate in one or more of these excellent events. I am thrilled that our NFO grants will be able to assist many of you in attending these events in the future.



The month of July presented a short break from my regular schedule of university life. After teaching for the Kentucky Dance Institute (KDI – an excellent folk dance camp designed especially for adults and children) my focus has been on grandchildren and the demolition and construction of a bathroom in our home.

Contracting out the work of designing and building a bathroom is harder than it first looks. One morning we woke up to a very leaky pipe (it's a good thing we are doing this now!). Protocol suggested turning off all the water in our home until we could remedy the situation. Of course it happened on a Sunday at a very inopportune time for outside assistance, and to make things worse, our family was coming over to make dinner. One leaky pipe made everything else really, really hard. You don't realize how many tasks in your home depend on having running water available and working. One doesn't appreciate everything the way we should until something is taken from us, or

no longer works. Folk dancers understand this principle well. When a toe (or finger) is accidentally jammed or injured, folk dancing is never the same until the injured part becomes completely healed and functional ... just like our broken pipe.

The same principle applies to the workings of an organization. When everyone is taking care of their stewardships and responsibilities and there are not “leaky pipes,” the organization runs like a “well-oiled machine” and one tends to forget to show the appreciation they have for every member of the team. That's how I feel about those I work with in NFO. They are spectacular people, and very good at what they do. Because of their efforts, my job is made simple.

Let me take this opportunity to thank each of you – NFO officers, members of the Board of Trustees, and those serving on our committees – for the unknown amounts of time selflessly spent in behalf of this great organization and its members.

You are all priceless gems in my treasure chest!

— Ed Austin —



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CHICAGO SPRING FESTIVAL AT INTERNATIONAL HOUSE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

Diane Baker, Corona del Mar, California

The Festival advertising promised “3½ days of celebrations with world-renowned master teachers and artists, spectacular live music, riveting dance & musical performances featuring dance and music of the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Eastern Mediterranean. Sing, jam & dance on a sprung oak floor with friends from coast to coast.” And, believe it or not, the experience exceeded the promises!

A beautiful atmosphere of respect, caring, sharing, goodwill, support, cooperation, friendship, and generosity pervaded the great hall. We shared renewed appreciation for the cultural traditions into which we were briefly transported through dance and music.

Spring Festival is part of the International House Global Voices Performing Series and is co-sponsored by the International House, the Center for Eastern European and Russian/Eurasian Studies, plus Ensemble Balkanske Igre. Cultural sessions are a highlight of Spring Festival. On Thursday Kete Ilievski, born into a family of dancers and musicians in Skopje, Macedonia, presented film clips and stories from his homeland. We glimpsed his father (the first Macedonian professional choreographer) leading Postupano Oro in the 1948 film “Jugoslavenski Narodni Plesovi.” Atanas Kolarovski was the youngest dancer. Next we viewed clips of local men demonstrating their prowess at a folklore seminar in Struga, then John Kuo dancing in 1987 at the Saints day celebration at the St. Pantelejmon Monastery near Skopje, Macedonia. To complete the circle, Kete taught Postupano Oro on Sunday and executed impressive squats and turns as he did in the film clips.

Friday’s culture class featured Nina Kavardjikova talking about the musical and dance traditions of Bulgaria throughout history. She described the role of the church and families in maintaining culture during the Ottoman occupation and the State’s role in preserving village traditions in the Soviet era. “Who



Chicago’s International House (internet).

will step in to preserve those traditions in the 21st century?” she asked. Villages are becoming “museums” as young folks move to cities for education and employment. Schools and dance clubs in cities provide opportunities to dance, but do not preserve the cultural heritage. If you want to adopt a village, contact Nina!

Saturday was billed as a joint cultural session by Yannis

Konstantinou and Ahmet Luleci. Yannis had prepared a detailed history from his native region surrounding Florina, West Macedonia. As French soldiers built roads in the area during WWI they took photographs. On the screen we witnessed changes over time in buildings, dress, vehicles, fields, tools, etc. Yannis pointed out communities of Bulgarians, Macedonians and Rrom all living amicably as neighbors in the same village, but attended their own churches and schools. Their weddings took place on the same date, the name day of the village, with the different groups attending their own celebrations.

Men leaving the village for work to support their families gave rise to a shift in norms of the dance line. Traditionally men danced together, and if women joined, a kerchief maintained space between the male and female dancer. When a man returned from work abroad to the village his son danced next to him. His wife, wanting to enjoy the company of her husband and son, broke with tradition and danced between them. We were so entranced by Yannis’ stories and photos that the hour flew by. Ahmet, in the spirit of generosity that characterized the festival, invited us to join his next tour of Turkey and see the culture and geography in person, since culture hour had come to *(continued on next page)*

Did you know you can pay your
NFO membership fees and make donations
on-line using PayPal or your credit card?

an end. For those wanting to continue cultural immersion, Bob Leibman shared his research among the Tosk Albanians in the Lake Prespa region of the Republic of Macedonia in the early 1970s.

Vocal, instrumental and dance workshops got us up early each morning. Ventzi Sotirov got us breathing with his high energy “Oj Galab Guka” dance from Blagoevgrad. Nina began with the soft and elegant “Kyoroholu” from the village of Gotse Delchev. Ahmet challenged everyone with the Kurdish dance, “Helev” in 10/8 rhythm. Yannis taught authentic Greek-Macedonian dances, while his lovely daughter Xenia led the dance line. Chris Bajmakovich taught Rrom singing plus accordion.

There were classes in clarinet, gadulka, tapan and vocal classes with virtuoso musicians.

A highlight of Spring Festival is the Saturday evening concert. In recognition of the 50th anniversary, concerts took place Friday and Saturday evenings. Both concerts featured so many exquisitely costumed ensembles and gifted artists. The Tatty Polish Highlanders generated heartfelt applause with



Tatty Polish Highlanders' youngest dancer.

the youngest and oldest dancers executing breathtaking leaps and stamps on a stump. A late addition to the program was the Trioda Ukrainian Vocal Trio, on a tour to raise funds for humanitarian relief in Ukraine. The CCEA Chinese School captivated the audience with their luminous Uyghur Dance. For Friday's concert Balkanske Igre reprised the Shopsko Horo Suite choreographed by Ventzi Sotirov, Petar Petrov and Tihomir Dontchev that they had performed in 1994 for the Opening Ceremonies of the World Cup. On Saturday they concluded the program with a high energy medley of Dajchovo, Shopsko and Shopska Rachenitsa.

Braća Tamburitza Orchestra kicked off the dance party Thursday evening. James Stoyanoff, clarinet virtuoso, and Orchestra Balkana played Friday evening. Balkanski Ritmi Bitov Orchestra (gaida, tapan, kaval and gadulka) played Bulgarian classics with flourish and artistry on Friday and Saturday.

Chris Bajmakovich headlined Muzika4U on Saturday and led off Friday's party with a sensuous èòèk. Californian Bill Cope brought his gadja and played with everyone. Dance parties at Spring Festival gather energy from young and seasoned dancers intertwining around the hall. The dancing was non-stop until 1:00 a.m. There is a musical/social interlude in the lounge between the concert and the dance party. Music plays while guests dance or socialize. Performing groups swap photos; friends from across the country find each other and catch up on life between festivals.

Festival Director, John Kuo and his multi-tasking, competent volunteer festival staff managed logistics. Salonica, a nearby Greek restaurant, prepared sandwiches for lunch, and a multi-course buffet dinner Friday and Saturday evenings. John was ably assisted by his wife Galia, who has been dancing since she was a toddler.

Mark your calendars now for the **51st Spring Festival, March 18 – 20, 2016**. Plan to spend a few extra days in Chicago to enjoy the city's museums, lakefront walking path, public sculptures, music and clubs.



Dancing around the band. All photos by D. Baker.

WANT PDF?

The NFO-News is available in PDF. If you prefer to receive your copy as an attachment to an email, please contact our NFO News Editor, Loui Tucker at loui@louisitucker.com and she will send you the NEXT issue as a PDF file instead of hard copy. The photos that appear in black-and-white in the hard copy will appear in color in the PDF, and the hyperlinks will work!



You don't stop dancing when you grow old. You grow old when you stop dancing!



[All photos from the web]

JOINT SKI-AND-DANCE WEEKEND IN THE PICTURESQUE POCONO MOUNTAINS OF PENNSYLVANIA

Loretta Holz, Warren, New Jersey

The weekend of January 29-31, 2016, will continue a dancing tradition which started 38 years before. For the last dozen years it's been called the Joint Ski and Dance Weekend, co-sponsored by Monmouth Folk Dancers (Tuesday evenings in Red Bank, NJ) and Morristown Folk Dancers (Wednesday evenings in Mountain Lakes, NJ).

The Monmouth dancers started the tradition of a winter weekend in the Poconos in February 1982. Regina Feldman says, "Bernice Rissman, Steve Knowlton and I drove to the Poconos one day in November, 1981, looking for a place to have a cross country ski weekend. We had discussed it in our group and thought it would be a great way to be together and create closeness within the group. We had our first weekend in 1982 at the White Cloud resort in Panther, PA. Over 30 of us went and most of us skied, sometimes morning and afternoon, and danced all evening. About a dozen members in our music group played while others listened and chatted nearby. We changed the location a couple of times, but we never missed a year for the next 12 years."

Andy Montano a member of the Morristown group for many years, joined the Monmouth group in 2004 so he could dance two nights a week. Since the Monmouth group had decreased in size, he made the suggestion that the Morristown dancers become a co-sponsor of the ski/dance weekend.

Randi Spiegel remembers the Morristown group "had run a ski-and-dance weekend at Pocono Educational Environmental Center organized by Rhoda and Murray Hasson, with skiing during the day and dancing at night, or even some dancing during the day. One year we cancelled because there was no snow and the next year we had to cancel because there

was too much snow. The decision was made to no longer run our ski-and-dance weekend, so we thrilled to be invited by the Monmouth group to become co-sponsors of their weekend."

The idea for the combined weekend was well received by both groups. They started running the weekend together in January 2005, calling it the First Annual Joint Ski and Folk Dance Weekend. Regina commented, "It was a wonderful idea! It breathed new life into our group. It slowly evolved into more folk dance sessions during the day, so there was less skiing and more dancing. It is still evolving as now we have people coming who aren't in either group as they hear about us. Best of all, we have managed to sustain the camaraderie and relaxed atmosphere and new friendships."

The weekend is held at the Pocono Manor in Pennsylvania, a well maintained hotel over 100 years old. The property is large and picturesque. Dancers make their reservations directly with the hotel. Because it is run by volunteers, there is no additional charge for the weekend. We have the use of the huge ballroom, with a wood floor and a complete sound system, for the weekend at no additional charge.

The weekend starts Friday afternoon when

folks who can come early gather to decorate the ballroom. Once the initial set up is done, early bird request dancing starts. At 5:00 both Friday and Saturday we gather in the Lamplighter Lounge for complimentary hors d'oeuvres. Dinner follows, a multi-course meal served in the large dining room. *(continued on next page)*



Dancing in the ballroom at the Pocono Manor (photo by A. Kazin)

On Friday and Saturday night dancers enjoy lots of request dancing. Programmers work in pairs – one each from Morristown and Monmouth – for one hour. In 2015, programmers from the Princeton Folk Dance group were included for the first time. While each of the groups has its own repertoire, there is a lot of overlap so the dance floor is very busy. Each group finds new dances among the ones the other group has included in the program which means both groups learn dances to take home and enjoy.

On Saturday, sessions of request dancing are followed by 20-minute workshops. The teachers are all well-prepared volunteers who do a professional job. The goal is to have something for everyone including Balkan, Israeli, Russian, English and more. The dances taught are danced during the evening party and during other sessions of request dancing.

At 3:00 PM on Saturday, dancers have a choice of activities, including a musicians' practice session, set dancing in the ballroom, swimming in the indoor pool, hiking, down-hill and cross-country skiing, skating, dog sledding and more. Gloria Gross, a dancer waylaid by foot problems, offers free jewelry-making lessons. Others take the opportunity to nap.

All folk dancers are welcome – new and experienced. As more people hear that they will be enthusiastically welcomed, the number has increased to over 60. Dancers from the Poughkeepsie, NY, area started coming five years ago. Their local dance group had been defunct for a few years but attending the weekend encouraged them to start dancing again and, while their group has not been reborn, many are dancing with another group. A dancer who lives far out on Long Island has no place to dance locally, but she comes every year to the weekend.

Another benefit of the weekend is the chance to see folk dance friends who have moved away. Kim and Michael Huster who were regular Morristown dancers now come every year to the weekend from their home in Pittsburgh.

On Sunday morning the teachers do a quick review of each dance that was taught, and the dances are videoed and available on line. Dancers are encouraged to give feedback on the weekend. Evaluation sheets ask what they like and what can be improved. The answers are carefully read and used when planning the next year's weekend.

The tradition continues. The weekend of **January 29-31, 2016** will see folk dancers getting together at the Pocono Manor in the lovely scenic Pocono Mountains area of PA. For more information email Loretta.Holz@gmail.com



Joint Ski-and-Dance Weekend evening dance party. (photo by A. Kazin)

REMINDER TO ALL NFO INSURANCE CERTIFICATE HOLDERS

If you need to renew your certificate of insurance, email Richard Eddy *starting October 20, 2015* at rteddy.consulting@gmail.com

DO NOT REQUEST a renewal before October 20. The umbrella policy does not start until November 9, 2015, and your certificate is good until that date.

FOLK DANCE EVENTS NETWORK

September 9-14, 2015. ZEDASHE ENSEMBLE TOUR
Various workshops and concerts (and a wine tasting!)

during the week at several locations in Minneapolis MN. This is the kick-off of their tour which continues through October on the East Coast. Info: www.zedashe.com/tour

September 18-20, 2015. MOUNTAIN PLAYSHOP
(30th year) at YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly, Black Mountain, NC. Teaching by Nikolay Tsvetkov (Bulgarian). Info: www.mountainplayshop.org

September 24-27, 2015. WORLD CAMP 2015 at Iroquois Springs, near Rock Hill, in the Catskill Mountains. Joe Graziosi (Greek), Atanas Kolarovski (Macedonia), Yannis Konstantinou (Greek), Steve Kotansky (Balkan), Ahmet Luleci (Turkish), Ventzi Sotirov (Bulgarian); plus live musicians. Info: www.worldcamp.us/

September 25-27, 2015. FANDANGO DANCE WEEKEND (20th year) at Morningside Baptist Church in Clarkston, GA. English Country Dance with Brad Foster. Info: sites.google.com/site/englishcountrydanceatlanta/

October 1-4, 2015. TAMBURITZA EXTRAVAGANZA in Rosemont, IL at the Westin O'Hare, 6100 N River Road. Features Željko Jergan (Croatian) and bands and musicians! Info: <https://tamburitza-public.sharepoint.com>

October 12, 2015. HAMBO FEST WITH NORSKE RUNDDANSERE. Learn the Hambo 7:30-8:30 then dance Sweden's National Dance and other easy dances until 10 pm. SHF's Nordia House, 8800 SW Oleson Road, Portland, OR. Info: www.norskerunddansere.org

October 16-17, 2015. BULGARIAN FOLK FESTIVAL at West Mifflin Middle School, 81 Commonwealth Ave, West Mifflin, PA (outside Pittsburg). Dance workshops (Aleksander Zankin), two dinners with live music, dance performances, at more. Info: www.bmnecc.org, 412-461-6188, or peter.djalaliev@gmail.com

October 23, 2015. FALL SWEDISH MUSIC AND DANCE WEEKEND at Folklore Village in Dodgeville, WI. Teaching by Roo Lester and Larry Harding. Info: www.folklorevillage.org or call 608-924-4000.

October 26, 2015. NORSKE RUNDDANSERE'S HARVEST DANCE SCANDINAVIAN FOLK DANCE
Live music by Hale Bill and the Bopps of Washington. 7:30-10 pm. SHF's Nordia House, 8800 SW Oleson Road, Portland OR. Info: www.norskerunddansere.org

November 7, 2015. THIRD BIENNIAL SILK ROAD DANCE FESTIVAL Mount Rainier, MD. Joe's Movement Emporium, 3309 Bunker Hill Road Info: www.facebook.com/SilkRoadDanceFestival

November 26-29, 2015. TEXAS CAMP 2015 (68th year) Teachers: Mihai David (Romanian) and Campbell Miller (Social Dance). Greene Valley Camp (south of Waco). Info: <http://tiffd.org/texas-camp/> or ijnbloom@gmail.com

November 28-29, 2015. (Thanksgiving Weekend). KOLO FESTIVAL (64th year) at the Croatian- American Cultural Center in San Francisco, CA. Teachers: Ahmet Luleci and Michael Ginsburg. Info: <http://balkantunes.org/kolofestival/>

February 12-15, 2016. FLORIDA FOLK DANCE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS' WEEKEND FOLK DANCE WORKSHOP. Teachers: Roberto Bagnoli and Ed Austin. Orlando Renaissance Airport Hotel. Info: www.folkdance.org

SEEKING PERFORMING GROUPS

October 1-6, 2015. SECOND INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL "ARMENIA" in Tsakhkadzor, Armenia E-mail: philharmonia@web.am or sargmargaryan@mail.ru Info: www.facebook.com/childphilharmonic
Phone: 3-741-058-5792

April 18-24, 2016 THE INTERNATIONAL ANTALYA CHILDREN FESTIVAL (sponsored by FOMGED) in Antalya, Turkey. In its 26th year. Seeks folk dances modern dance, music, ballet, chorus, circus, band and harmonic, traditional children street games, dance theater and rhythmic gymnastics, consisting of children aged 8-14. Send the Application Form to FOMGED Head Office by December 15th, 2015.

www.fomgedclub.com/eng/cocukinfo.html

Also: **May 14-20, 2016 INTERNATIONAL ANTALYA YOUTH FESTIVAL** and **June 20-25, 2016 INTERNATIONAL ANTALYA MUSIC & DANCE FESTIVAL**

If there is an event you would like see included on this list in the future, please contact NFO News Editor, Loui Tucker, at loui@loutucker.com, before December 10 for the January issue, April 10 for the May issue, and August 10 for the September issue. You may also choose to pay for an advertisement.