

NFO NEWS

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15221 N. CR 400E
Eaton, IN 47338

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May
2021

A CONFERENCE THANK YOU!

Cricket Raybern, Portland, Oregon

An annual conference takes months to plan and execute, but all of that is for naught if no one attends. Holding the 2021 NFO Conference online made it possible for people to attend who would not have been able to attend in person, and they did!

Thank you to all who were able to attend any of our conference. We had 1700 people register, and many of them joined us for at least a session or two. It was incredible to see everyone.

Once we realized that the 2021 event needed to be online, it opened up programming opportunities. We were not bound by location, time, or number of attendees, so off we went.

The result was five days of programming, with 30-plus presenters and discussion leaders; more than a dozen Master Teachers doing presentations or leading dances; almost a dozen bands playing live or via a recorded session; more than 30 different dance groups from across the country, and even a few other countries, leading dances for our dance parties; and two sessions done in conjunction with the Folk Arts Center of New England. The programming itself consisted of craft, instrumental, dance, and singing workshops, as well as talks and discussions.

One of the things about an online event is that you have the opportunity to market the event to a much broader range of people. We had the great fortune to have Ahmet Lüleci create 19 teaser videos that we then posted to our YouTube channel, as well as sharing them on Facebook. The result is that many people who had never heard of the NFO became aware of us (even if they didn't know that NFO stands for National Folk Organization), and many of those registered for and attended our conference. It was awesome to have the opportunity to share our event and organization with these people, as well as our many members who have never been able to attend a conference.

The bottom line is that more than 125 people were directly involved with making this event happen, plus 1700 people who registered to attend the event. To all of you...thank you!

NFO CONFERENCE AFTERTHOUGHTS

Diane Baker, Corona del Mar, California

Zoom has delivered so many virtual international dance festivals to my living room this year. How much would the NFO annual conference excite my curiosity and maintain my attention? Lots and lots, it turns out! Each festival/conference/event has a distinctive personality. A mélange of folk arts—fine arts, song, instrumental music-making, dance, film, storytelling, poetry, all individually introduced and narrated—characterized the NFO conference in 2021. Lectures and panel presentations aroused critical discussion that continued into break-out rooms.

I remain mesmerized by the gentle scarf dance of the Qashqai people, and am eager to see it danced at a traditional event in southern Iran. The Resources page on the conference website allowed me to re-visit Phil Jamison and view his exuberant, yet precise, flat-

(Continued on page 6)

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

NFO President Jeanette Geslison, Provo, Utah

As I write this message, I am in awe at the marvelous virtual conference in which we just participated. With 1700 people registered, we partook of numerous eclectic cultural dance, music, and arts presentations by scholars and experts from around the world. At the highest peaks, we had an average of 350 participants on Zoom, from all corners of the world. How inspiring!

This conference was made possible by the efforts of many people, including the presenters, the organizing team, the technicians, the MCs, the donations team, the marketing team (including video preparation, documents, web page, and social media), the games team, and the dance party planners and leaders. Numerous hours of Zoom meetings were held in preparation for the event. Detailed and meticulous organization and planning contributed to the high conference quality we experienced. The technical support people and MCs were professional in every way. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to every single person involved, especially to Cricket Raybern, who has been at the helm of it all. Congratulations on the outstanding vision and work to make this conference a resounding success!



One of the most remarkable aspects of this virtual conference was coming together with so many of you and knowing that we share the passion of folk arts. It was wonderful to converse in “chat” and connect throughout the various topics presented. The quality and variety of presentations were extremely engaging all the way through. The questions asked, and the information provided, raised our awareness and appreciation of the incredible work that is being done in the cultural arts.

During the daily dance parties, we literally danced across the United States (and farther) in our living rooms. I loved seeing so many familiar faces and hearing all of your voices.

Thank you for participating and sharing dance and music. The dance parties truly felt like a sharing event that brought us closer as friends across miles of distance.

I look forward to the many virtual cultural arts events that are planned for this spring and summer, all thanks to the current technology available to us. I look forward to staying in touch and to hopefully see you all in person soon.

If there is an event you would like see included on the Folk Dance Events Network list in the future, please contact NFO News Editor Kathy Bruni at kdbruni@gmail.com, before January 10 for the February issue, April 10 for the May issue, August 10 for the September issue, and November 10 for the December (conference-focused) issue.

You may also choose to pay for an advertisement; the deadlines for ads are the same as for events.

DO YOU PREFER PDF?

The *NFO-News* is available in PDF. If you prefer to receive your copy as an attachment to an email, please contact NFO News Editor Kathy Bruni at kdbruni@gmail.com and you will receive 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!

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Jim Gold International Folk Tours: 2021-23



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GREECE and the GREEK ISLANDS: October 9-22, 2021
 Led by Jim Gold and Lee Otterholt.: Athens, Nauplia, Sparta, Olympia, Delphi, Meteora, Mycenae, and Epidaurus, **Greek Island Cruise** to Mykonos, Crete, Rhodes, Patmos, Kusadasi (Turkey)

2022

ISRAEL: March 13-24, 2022
 Led by Jim Gold, Joe Freedman, and Lee Friedman
 Jerusalem, Masada, Tel Aviv, Galilee, Haifa, Tiberias, Safed, and Golan Heights

ALBANIA and KOSOVO: May 1-11 ext. 11-13, 2022
 Led by Lee Otterholt. Tirana, Durres, Gjirokaster Folk Festival! Kruja, Saranda, Berat, Shkodra.

PERU, BOLIVIA, CHILE: May 21-June 2, 2022
 Led by Martha Tavera. Cuzco, Sacred Valley, Machu Picchu, Quechua Village, Lake Titicaca, Uyuni, La Paz, Atacama Desert

NORWAY, DENMARK, SWEDEN: June 7-21, 2022
 Led by Lee Otterholt. Oslo, Gothenburg, Helsingborg, Copenhagen

BULGARIA: August 1-14, 2022 **Koprivshitsa Folk Festival Tour!**
 Led by Jim Gold, Lee Otterholt, Lee Friedman
 Sofia, Plovdiv, Bansko, Veliko Turnovo

ROMANIA: October 3-16, 2022 **Klezmer and Folk Dance Tour**
 Led by Jim Gold with Nancy Hoffman and Lee Friedman
 Bucharest, Brasov. Sibiu

2023

GERMANY, AUSTRIA, LICHTENSTEIN, SWITZERLAND
 June 14-27, 2023. **Folk Dance and Yodeling Tour**
 Led by Jim Gold, Lee Otterholt, and Lee Friedman
 Munich, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Swiss Alps, Lucerne, Zurich

IRELAND: August 5-17, 2023
 Led by Jim Gold and Lee Friedman
 Galway, Connemara, Aran islands, Doolin, Killarney, Kerry, Cork, Blarney, Dublin

SPAIN: September 14-27, 2023: Led by Lee Otterholt
 Malaga, Cadiz, Seville, Cordoba, Jaen, Granada

TOUR REGISTRATION: Can't wait to go! Reserve my place! Choose your tour. \$200 per person deposit. Or register and send deposits on line at: www.jimgold.com/folk-tours

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Jim Gold International, Inc. 497 Cumberland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666 U.S.A.
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ATTENDING POURPARLER

Jacob Bloom, Arlington, Massachusetts

Back in 2001, I saw a flyer announcing that there was going to be a weekend-long get-together of community dance leaders in Colrain, Massachusetts, in autumn. Since I did a lot of leading of community dances, this interested me. I had two small children at the time, and leaving my wife alone with them for a weekend would usually have been difficult to negotiate, but my wife had a very close friend who lived in Colrain, and it worked out that we could stay with them for the weekend, and I would spend the days at the conference. I signed up for the weekend.

I used the term “community dance leaders” above, but actually I don’t remember what term was used on the flyer, or if any term was used at all. Perhaps it just referred to people who led folk dancing for schools, churches, and parties. Whatever term was used, I can’t recall ever before having seen anything that suggested that leading dancing for these kinds of groups was anything special. I danced regularly, so I was used to seeing dance leaders when they led dancing for groups of people who danced regularly. I aspired to being recognized as someone who was good at leading dancing for those groups. Still, I led more dances for people who seldom danced. I chose a dance that I found very useful for such groups, and wrote up a description of it to share with the other leaders.

Sanna Longden was the organizer of this get-together, Pourparler, and she kept everyone involved, and kept the dances and discussions moving along. I learned some new dances I could use, but more importantly, I met and shared with other people who regularly faced the problems of trying to understand which dance moves are easy for a group of dance novices and which are difficult, of trying to give clear explanations, of trying to organize a dance where none has ever existed, of trying to communicate the joy of dancing to people who are unsure whether or not they will allow themselves to have fun. Being together with them, and sharing thoughts with them, meant that I went home after the weekend with a deeper understanding of what I was trying to do when I led dancing for a community. The people who come and dance together won’t remember who led the dancing, but they will become more comfortable in their own bodies and with each other, and that’s important.

Pourparler was held in a different part of the country the next year, but I attended when it was held in New England again in 2005, 2007, and 2013. In 2011, when it was held in Texas, I traveled there to be among my colleagues on my sixtieth birthday, and I’ve also flown to Wisconsin and Maryland for it. Each time I go, I share a dance that I have led very often in the past year, and enjoy the feeling of being among comrades, and of feeling that what I do is worthwhile. There is nothing that fortifies your self-

respect as much as having someone who has just led a dance in a novel way that blew you away tell you how much they enjoyed what you presented!

Many of the colleagues I’ve met at Pourparler have published books and DVDs about leading community dances. Peter and Mary Alice Amidon, Marian Rose, Laraine Miner, Sue Hulsether, Paul Rosenberg, and of course Sanna Longden, are all people whom I am privileged to be able to call colleagues, but every one of the people I have met there has impressed me with his/her ability to spread the joys of dance and music. There is an email group of Pourparler alumni, where people ask each other for a certain kind of dance or advice on presenting to a certain kind of group, and all of us on the list are eager to help each other whenever we can.

Pourparler puts those of us who lead community dancing in touch with each other, helps us understand what we are trying to do, and makes us better at it. Thanks to the National Folk Organization for helping to make it happen!

POURPARLER HAS ANSWERS

Donna Frankel, Saratoga, California

Perhaps it is because I had such wonderful experiences at Pourparler (when it was held in California, later in Texas, and more recently, via Zoom) dancing and singing with teachers and volunteers who bring dances to those under age seven and/or over age 70, that I felt moved to let the traditional folk dance world know that Pourparler is for them too. Unlike most dance camps, Pourparler doesn’t bring in paid or well-known teachers. We are all respected experts *and* respected learners at Pourparler, sharing easy and fun material that we love most, with the purpose of going home to expose ever more new participants to the love and joy of dancing. It is also just as much about sharing and invigorating those of us looking for new material, teaching styles, and techniques while we develop new friendships. Many of my favorite go-to dances and ideas came from a Pourparler participant.

I would be greatly remiss if I didn’t mention one of the huge benefits of attending a Pourparler weekend. The Google Group formed of alumni Pourparlerers (is that even a word?), ppalum, is a 24/7 personal treasure trove of assistance on almost any topic of dance or music you can think of. So, if you need an English translation of a Romanian song, you want ideas for modifying a favorite dance for a disabled population, you need a children’s dance from Bolivia but are tired of teaching the only one you already know, you can’t recall the hand motions for Pata Pata or the progression for ‘t Smidje, you can’t find the music for that new African dance, Jerusalem, or you need sheet music for your fiddler so he/she can accompany your next gig, *no problem*—for these, or other challenges. You’ll likely get multiple answers/ideas in a few hours, plus learn the challenges others have that you might be

able to solve, such as-how to manage partner dances solo during the pandemic, thoughts on the best portable equipment to purchase for an outdoor event, dances from three centuries for a Girl Scout Dance Badge. Did I say, *no problem*? Ppalum will fix you right up.

Pourparler weekends, when offered in person, are generally limited to a fairly small number of participants. This is so all can share and comfortably fit in relatively small venues, usually held in some very delightful but out-of-the-way place. How to get there from the airport? You want a roommate to share the hotel room cost, or you'd like restaurant suggestions that will meet your unusual dietary needs? *No problem*—even if you haven't yet met them, you are surrounded by your Pourparler friends, who will know the answers and can't wait to help you find good solutions.

If/when Pourparler is held virtually, the cost evaporates (no hotel, airfare, rental car, meals, conference fees) and there is no limit to the number of participants. It is a chance for all those who have wondered if they might attend, but aren't sure how they can clear their schedule, take care of other obligations like work, childcare, eldercare, etc., and fully participate. Virtual/Zoom makes these nonissues. I encourage all who are curious about attending to consider this fantastic opportunity this year!

POURPARLER 2021

Meg Dedolph, Naperville, Illinois

Event organizing is moving into the “era of the asterisk,” said Andy Davis, one of the people helping organize the 24th annual Pourparler conference, planned for Oct. 21–24 in Dummerston, Vermont.

The annual four-day conference is held in different locations around the country and draws a mix of dance leaders, from community dance organizers to teachers, in a range of genres.

Organizers are working in a time of uncertainty, where an event's success depends so much on state and local COVID regulations, which nobody can predict, Davis said.

Pourparler steering committee member Margaret Bary agreed. “We're going ahead and planning for a live event until we get information that we can't have it,” Bary said. “The issue will come when people have to book flights or when we have to put money down.”

Health regulations aside, Davis said he's not sure how people will feel about dancing again. “The other aspect of the asterisk is we don't yet know peoples' comfort level for ‘All join hands and circle left,’” he said. “I don't think anyone can really say what's going to happen when we say, ‘OK, everyone, get out of your chairs and form a circle.’ Some of us have not done that for over a year. It looks auspicious to be able to do it this fall, though.”

Regardless of the uncertainties, Davis is excited about the second Pourparler to be held at the Guiding Star Grange, a longtime spot for community dances in the area and a “quintessential potluck and dance hall.”

“These grange halls were basically built so rural people could go have a potluck supper and go attend a dance or a play or a concert in the big meeting hall upstairs,” he said.

On the Saturday night of Pourparler, the organizers host a community dance with music and calling provided by conference attendees, which Davis said fits in well with the local dance traditions.

“I like to think that wherever (Pourparler) goes, it reflects the local dance scene,” Davis said. “I think that's what we do here; give people the feeling of coming to a New England rural hall and playing in a big community band and going to a big community dance.”

Peter Amidon, who is also helping organize the Vermont conference, agreed. “We have such a very strong dancing tradition here,” he said. “Particularly Anglo-American social dance, American social dance. There's plenty of international dancing around here as well, so it's really nice to have a dance workshop and a dance conference in a place with a lot of dancing.”

Plus, Davis said, October is a great time to visit New England. “It's going to be in the middle of the foliage season in Vermont,” he said. “So there's a lot of good reasons for people to put this on their calendar.”

Despite the success of the 2020 event, held entirely on Zoom, organizers aren't sure yet what role—if any—online-only activities will play in this year's event.

“One thing we all got out of (the pandemic) is what we can use from what we've learned in the last year to make dancing more accessible to more people,” Amidon said. “I'd love to try to get as many young people to come as possible. There are some great young people who are callers and who teach dance to children, so I'd like to try to get some of them on the committee, which I know is a good way to draw more young people.”

Amidon said he hopes people put the event on their calendars and look forward to attending.

“I always find my dance teaching is better after these events,” he said. “Certainly, there are tips you pick up and dances and teaching techniques, but I think the deeper lesson we get from it is that you learn more deeply why you teach dance, and that's the most important thing we get out of this conference.”



Conference Afterthoughts (Continued from page 1)

footing. Still making use of the Resources page, I again admired Catherine Foley, Irish step dancer extraordinaire, and compared the two art forms, finding them similar indeed. Irish step dancing features more petite steps. Both have a complex history, and leave me breathless. Steve Kotansky, like a chameleon, has a unique presentation for every conference. For the NFO, he described traditional celebrations that take place in the Vlach communities of eastern Serbia, and he taught steps typically danced at their parties.

What a joyful experience to trek along with Mickela Mallozzi and hear the backstories that enable her cultural dance vignettes! During her narration, my own recollections of dancing informally with locals in Ecuador, Nicaragua, Portugal, Cuba, Cape Verde, etc., briefly came to mind.

I found all of the sessions of the conference enriching and aesthetically presented! The opportunity to learn from leaders about recreational dance groups across the country made evening dance parties especially enjoyable. Congratulations, NFO conference committee and volunteers; you created an informative, thought-provoking, and gratifying experience!

NFO CONFERENCE DANCE PARTIES—A SMORGASBORD OF TALENT AND FUN

Mady Newfield, St. Charles, Illinois

What happens when you put out a call for dance leaders, pair those who want it with exciting live music options, find performance groups with sparkling videos, bring it together with a knowledgeable and hard-working committee that organizes it all with Google forms and sheets and lots of emails, and execute it with a well-prepared, on-the-ball tech crew to make it all run smoothly? You get the three nights of dance parties that were enjoyed by some 300 people each evening during the recent online NFO conference.

It was an ultimately utterly exhilarating and satisfying experience to be a part of these. Our committee of five worked for six months to pull these parties together, and we are so grateful to all the participants.

Over the three evenings, there were 40 different segments, including 75 individuals dancing, five musicians who played live, another dozen or more who played in pre-recorded videos, and seven performance troupes. Dance leaders joined us from as far away as the Netherlands (Jaap Leegwater, his accordionist Jan Wollring, and tech helper Tijn Boissevain stayed up very late to join in live on Saturday evening) and Indonesia (Etty Soemardjo's group sent us videos of their native dancing), as well as from all parts of

the United States. Dance performances ranged from flashy American clogging to colorful Mexican to crisp Scottish highland to swirling Scandinavian to precision Transylvanian and Hungarian. One could dance along, not only with all sorts of more- and less-familiar international folk dances, but also Yiddish, contra, and English country dances. Or, just sit back and enjoy music from excellent bands and versatile musicians like Bill Cope, Tom Pixton, Don Weeda, Blato Zlato, Zlatne Uste, Free Range Organic, or Rare Privilege. Most impressive, from my perspective on the "inside," was how everyone involved worked together to make it all happen so seamlessly. (Photos by Alicia LaFetra.)



Stacy Rose and Gail Elber (North Bend, Oregon) dance *Jerusalem*



Jacob and Nancy Bloom (Arlington, Massachusetts) dance *Pata Pata*



Bill Cope (San Jose, California) plays for the Saturday dance party

KUDOS TO CRICKET!

Kathy Bruni, Auburn, Washington

At the President’s Reception on Wednesday night (the first night of the 2021 NFO annual conference), a surprise video played, honoring Cricket Raybern for the amazing job she did in planning and coordinating the first-ever virtual NFO annual conference. While she would be the first to say that she didn’t do it alone (and she did say that, in response to the video), all of us who were involved with the conference in any way know that Cricket is the one who had the vision and the executive skills to make it the fantastic conference it was.

The touching video was a project instigated by the Awards Committee, comprised of Roo Lester, Jo Crawford, and Taunya Lund, but it could not have been completed without the photos donated by many of Cricket’s friends in the NFO, and the technical and artistic wizardry of Ahmet Lüleci. Co-conspirators in pulling off the award presentation surprise: Adony Benaires, Dale Adamson, Ahmet Lüleci, Bruce Spainhower, and Wendy Raybern.

In addition to the video, the Awards Committee pulled off another tricky feat: surprising Cricket at her home with flowers and an award plaque. Cricket’s daughter Wendy and Cricket’s granddaughter were complicit in that venture, and Cricket was caught off guard and touched at the sweet gesture.



Cricket Raybern
in appreciation for
dedicated service
2021

National Folk Organization
of the U.S.A.



Those who missed the Wednesday night festivities had another chance to see the video at the end of the conference on Sunday.

In addition to being a competent and organized event planner, Cricket is a wonderful human being, and an amazing friend. Kudos to Cricket on a fantastic conference this year (and also to the many NFO conferences she has planned over the last several years, as NFO Vice President). We appreciate you!

IT’S A WRAP!

Kathy Bruni, Auburn, Washington

The 2021 NFO conference was one for the record books! With 1700 people registered, and more than 300 attending some of the sessions, it was by far the largest conference since I began attending in 2007.

It was—by far—also more work. While my part in the conference presentations was limited to the annual meeting and the President’s reception, even that required about eight hours of meetings and several more hours of Zoom research and preparation. Contrast that with my general prep time of about one hour for the same involvement at a live conference, and you can see that this conference was a lot more complicated, due to the technology required.

Those people who were involved in every aspect of the conference—Cricket and Adony, in particular, as well as the entire planning committee, and also the many people who were both techs and MCs repeatedly throughout the conference—spent many hundreds of hours preparing and presenting what you saw for whatever part of the conference you attended. The planning committee consisted of Cricket Raybern, Roo Lester, Jo Crawford, Jacob Madsen, Adony Benaires, Ahmet Lüleci, Pat Henderson, Alicia LaFetra, Bruce Spainhower, Dale Adamson, Evan Chu, Murray and Randy Spiegel, and Wendy Brown. Hats off to all of them! In addition, there were other committees and individual volunteers as MCs and techs, so around 125 people were directly responsible for making this event possible.

Having the conference on Zoom was definitely an advantage for the many, many people who have never attended a live NFO conference, and there were some programming advantages, as well. For example, presenters like Mickela Mallozzi, who have been unable to attend a live event in the past due to scheduling conflicts, could finally participate in the conference. Presenters from around the world gave lectures or taught dance classes; at a live conference, it isn’t in the budget to bring presenters from other countries to participate. Having the Wycinanki Polish paper cutting workshop was feasible because of participants being at home and on Zoom. Playing Kahoot and doing puzzles added levity in a way that is normally not possible at a live event. There was also extended programming at this conference; since participants didn’t have to travel, the conference extended into all day Sunday. Our in-person conferences generally end by noon

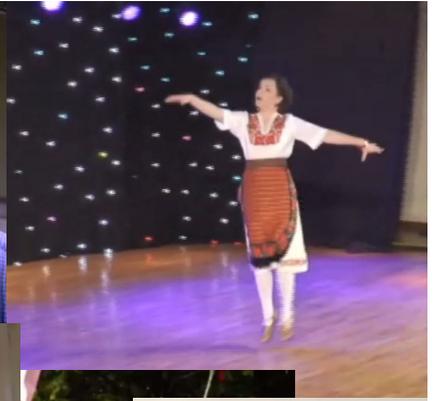
(Continued on page 10)

Conference glimpses...

Photos on these pages courtesy of Alicia LaFetra and Kathy Bruni.



Mabry Mill dancers 1984



SEALASKA HERITAGE



DONALD HÉENDEI GREGORY
Tlingit artist





Irish Dance Training



Sisters Catherine and Pat Foley. Circa 1963. The Peggy McTeggart School of Irish Dancing, Cork. Photo © Catherine Foley. Personal Archive.



From left to right: Ann Russell, Catherine Foley and Theresa Butler. Circa 1966. Photo © Catherine Foley. Personal Archive.



ROSITA KAAHĀNI WORL, PH.D.
President
Sealaska Heritage Institute



It's a Wrap! (Continued from page 7)

on Sunday, so that those who have to catch flights home don't miss the activities. So, there were many positives.

Those of you new to the conference, or to the NFO, might not realize that our in-person NFO conferences are just as wonderful, with the added incentive of dancing together, meeting new friends, investigating the local area, and a lovely awards banquet. Keynote speakers at the live conferences are generally drawn from the area where the conference is being held, and we have had many stellar speakers in the past—academics, folklorists, ethnologists, dance teachers, lawyers specializing in performer visas, and professionals of all types related to the mission of the NFO. I am always astounded at the quality of the presenters at the conference. Of course, there are also dance workshops, dancing every day, and other activities unique to each conference.

The 2021 conference, though, was special due to the circumstances of the pandemic and also due to how many wonderful people participated. It would be impossible to mention all the things I learned over the course of the conference. Other articles have mentioned some of the dance workshops, dance parties, and performances. I don't find dancing at home alone particularly scintillating; what I enjoyed most were the lectures, and the music and singing classes.

Phil Jameson's lecture about the History of South Appalachian Square Dance was fascinating. He has written a book about the subject and his talk was full of photos, drawings, and video clips illustrating his points, including the definite influence of Black Americans on southern square dances and music. Southern square dances used a circular visiting-couple format for any number of couples, with chorus figures. The choreography is flexible, with freeform timing. The dance form includes a large repertoire of distinctive dance figures, and the dances are very fast. In his workshop on Thursday, he taught us a few flatfooting moves—easy to do alone in a small space.

On Thursday, Dr. Catherine Foley talked about her dance journey, and the field research she did on traditional Irish dances. Her presentation included video clips and photos as well, including one of her playing the Celtic tin whistle while three older gentlemen showed off their Irish step dancing expertise. Their feet were nimble! On Sunday, she gave a workshop on the Irish tin whistle, which I enjoyed very much. (My husband wasn't too enamored of the squeaks emanating from my tin whistle, though...)

Another fascinating presentation on Thursday was a video about the Culture and History of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian of Southeast Alaska, including Tlingit artist Donald Gregory talking



about halibut hooks that were designed to catch only medium-sized halibut. They were not only practical, but also (often) works of art. Donald was also on the Zoom session to answer questions, and one point he made in answer to a question was that songs and stories are owned by the clans. Individuals must have permission before telling clan stories or singing clan songs.

Ahmet Lüleci talked about the wishing tree custom in Turkey, and showed lovely slides of various wishing trees around the country and their connection with history and the Ederlezi festival. The wishing trees often have pieces of paper tied to them with wishes—for example, for a husband, or a good job. There are also trees with blue glass amulets tied on them to protect people from the evil eye.

The lively Peruvian dance (Changanakuy) with Ruben Pachas was entertaining and accessible. It was also fun to not only see the woman's costume, but also how it was assembled.

The Wycinanki Polish paper cutting workshop with Sue Van Wassenhove challenged my artistic skills. She provided clear instructions and covered a lot of ground in the interesting workshop.

Friday's lecture by Stephanie Hall brought to light a lot I didn't know about the history of egg decorating. It was amazing to see the decorated ostrich eggs from thousands of years ago. The oldest one she showed was Phoenician and dated from about 600 BC. (It is in a British museum). Ostrich eggs were used as drinking vessels, and decorated ostrich egg shell fragments from 65,000 years ago have been found in a pit in Africa—10,000 year's worth of decorated ostrich egg vessels!



During our time with Mickela Mallozzi, she talked about how she started her television show, *Bare Feet*, with a couple of friends doing the video and editing work for the first two seasons, which she put on YouTube. Then, a commercial station wanted to buy her show, but she would have had to relinquish artistic control and wouldn't even have been in it! She was against making it commercially, because she makes the show to honor the cultures that she visits, not to make money. She was eventually given a time slot by PBS, but that doesn't come with funding. She said she has had an amazing time making the show, and she showed us several clips and talked about her experiences. She is one of us!

I am running out of space to continue my rundown of sessions that impressed or amazed me. Suffice it to say that each session I watched enriched my understanding of dance and culture. I am honored to be a part of the NFO, and to be friends with many wonderful people who are part of the folk dance and folk arts world. See you live (hopefully) in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 2022!

ORLANDO IFD CLUB CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF DANCING

Pat Henderson, Orlando, Florida

A group of avid folk dancers gathered on Daytona Beach April 16–18 at the Plaza Resort & Spa to celebrate the golden anniversary of the Orlando International Folk Dance Club (OIFDC). When the annual Florida Folk Dance Council Winter Workshop was cancelled in February, I proposed an in-person event, since most of us would be vaccinated by April. Florida usually has a one-day dance event called Spring Fling, so this was an expanded Spring Fling and a big anniversary party. It was also celebrating the 45th wedding anniversary for Bobby and me. I was able to find this hotel on the Atlantic Ocean with one wall with an ocean view. It was a beautiful setting, with 35 dancers and seven former dancers or family members attending. We had a “mask and holding hands optional”



policy in our dance hall, which was a very large 6,000 sq. ft. room. Andi Kapplin and Andy Pollock from Tampa and my husband, Bobby Quibodeaux, taught a few dances during the weekend. Mostly we had an all-request weekend of dancing for Friday night and Saturday. OIFDC has a list of dances popular by year, and almost half of the dances on that list were requested. We even did the partner dances of Kreuz König and Hole in the Wall. Of course, we did Dodi Li, since that is how Bobby and I ended our outdoor wedding ceremony on April 24, 1976. On Sunday morning, we reviewed and made videos of the ones taught.



One highlight of the weekend was the program: “The 3 Fs: 50 Years of Folk Dancing, Fun and Friends.” Some early members and former leaders were invited to lunch and to share insight into those early years of the club’s history.

Our club was started by David Digby at the Unitarian Church in Orlando in the spring of 1971. One of our current members, Larry Wartell, was at the first meeting. David moved away in the early ‘80s with a change of jobs, and we had Katy Warner and Raynette Kibbee take over the group for a few years. They put our music on short cassette tapes, which worked well until Bobby and I put our music on minidisks, probably in the mid ‘90s. That lasted until MP3 files were made popular and we went to music on the computer. We collected music from several sources and in 2001, Bobby was recovering from heart surgery and cleaned up the database so we had no duplicates and he used software to clean up bad recordings. We now have a very pristine music collection. Katy, who originally came from New York, asked how many were at the 1964 World’s Fair where Michael and Mary Ann Herman danced, and around 6-8 hands went up. It was quite a moment.

Then Bobby brought the group up to date, since he and I have been leading our group for over 30 years. This year will mark 23 years of dancing in the studio on our property in east Orlando. Last year before the pandemic, we were having 30–35 dancers every week, so we decided to expand the dance studio for a pandemic project. We had two dancers in our bubble who danced with us in May and June while we Zoomed for those not there. We finished the expansion last July, and in September we started our regular dance season with a few people dancing (with masks). We currently have ten or more coming every week to dance in person, plus we Zoom. As dancers get fully vaccinated, we are adding one a week lately.

It was a special weekend for all of us as we tried to put last year behind us. Those of us who knew David, who always danced in flip flops, felt his spirit there. We wish that his widow, Dorothy Archer, could have been there. I am sure that we made David proud when we started our dance sessions with a few of us in flip flops dancing Makedonsko Devojce!



Pat and Bobby’s dance studio

HOW I DANCED AROUND THE WORLD DURING COVID

Bridget Blomfield, Denver, Colorado

For years I lived in places like Alaska, Nebraska, and Colorado, none of which are known for a wide variety of ethnic dance. Although I found some wonderful Persian dance classes in Denver, I was left with a longing to study global dance. While in San Francisco, I attended a weekend retreat studying Persian dance. There, I saw a flyer tacked to a cork board at the dance studio. I was mesmerized. On the flyer were numerous photos of women dressed in beautiful costumes from various countries. They were costumed in luscious silks, elaborate headpieces, and culturally authentic jewelry. I felt the movement flowing from the still photos. My dream realized, I had found the ANAR DANA dance ensemble taught by Helene Eriksen. She offered a program of ethnic and cultural dances I have wanted to study for years. I quickly enrolled, deciding to fly from Denver to San Francisco to participate in the year-long program. Then, out of nowhere, COVID-19 appeared.

Just when we all needed to dance away the stress and fear of potential death, and bond together with a loving group, it appeared impossible. Classes were cancelled everywhere. Dance studios closed, and people became terrified to leave their homes. Of course, all of the dancers who had enrolled in the program were heartbroken that it would be cancelled, but then came Zoom! The ANAR DANA group could still attend classes as we travelled from country to country from our own homes. I packed my suitcase with scarves and shawls and immediately ordered a “khaleegi” dress to dance in, as part of our itinerary included visiting West Sahara.

First, we traveled to Palestine to learn dabkeh. I had been there before, so I went straight to my closet and pulled out my beautifully embroidered thobe, attached the embroidered white scarf to my head, and pulled on the gold coin head piece. Such wonderful memories of attending a wedding in a Palestinian village! If only I had known dabkeh then. I turned on my Zoom camera and prepared for class. My classmates were excited to learn dabkeh, the traditional dance of Palestine. We greeted each other from around the world. Participating in our Zoom studio were women from Japan, Iran, the U.S., Germany, and Argentina. I was thrilled to see that many of my travel companions were women in my age group (late 60s), as well as many young women.



At ANAR DANA no one is too old to celebrate dance!

My excitement peaked as we landed in the West Sahara to study Sahrouie dance.

Sahrouie dance has beautiful, subtle finger gestures and hip movements. We are learning the dance of the tbal, in which women play the drum while making playful pantomimic gestures. Surprisingly, this is my favorite dance. I have always been a dancer first, not a musician, but the drumming accompanied by hand



movements combines both. You can sit and dance at the same time. I wasn't the only traveler that loved this part of the world and the dances it offered. One wrote, “Around the world with Mimi and ANAR DANA! Destination: the Western Sahara Desert, peopled by the Sahraouie. Mimi is my tabby, and she has accompanied me, through Zoom, every time we have flown to Morocco in my heart and mind, which is the best mode of transport. I often close my eyes as I move to those authentic tribal rhythms. While Mimi sleeps through most of the dance, I clap and move my feet and hips to desert music. What a gift this is. This pandemic has perhaps reconnected us to the world in ways that we should be grateful for.”

My favorite place to visit was the Persian Gulf, to study Khaleegi dance. Khaleegi is a mixture of modern and traditional folkloric dance and is performed by women at weddings and other social events. It is joyful and expressive, with beautiful gestures celebrating various events. The dress, which is very long and glittery, is used as a prop to create movements that look like waves. Much of the dance originates from the recognition of the beauty and importance of the sea. Another important movement is the throwing of hair from side to side. Having short gray hair cut in a bob, I thought I wouldn't be good at performing it, but one of the dancers said, “Most people think about the hair tossing and twirling. But I think it's such a unique dance in that you use the oversized thobe to hide, reveal, and make flowing motions with the fabric.” Her comment soothed my hesitation.

Besides dance, Helene gave monthly lectures about the countries we visited. Her PowerPoint presentations included the history and context of the dances we were studying, as well as photos of clothing worn and videos of people dancing. The lectures brought an academic part to dance, so as we travelled and danced from country to country, I felt like I knew the people, beyond just watching a performance.

One of the most fun dances we learned were dances done in the United States by people of Armenian heritage. These line dances have been done for centuries in Armenia and now have a slightly different twist in the United States.

After church on Sundays Armenians meet in the park for a picnic and dancing. Helene taught us these authentic dances from the 1950s. We spent months finding dresses and hats for that era. Despite COVID, we were able to meet together outside, wearing our masks, in beautiful, sunny California. After dancing in the sunshine, we sat down for a real picnic, thankful to be with friends in the fresh air.



Well, I'm off to Azerbaijan (this time via Zoom) with my friends from ANAR DANA to study Yalli, and then we go to Iran to learn Azeri and Bandari. I look forward to seeing my travel mates' smiling faces. Everyone is always so enthusiastic. We are like a nomadic sisterhood. I'm not taking much in my suitcase, because I'm sure that I will come back with much more than I'm leaving with!

Bridget Blomfield is a retired professor of Islamic Studies. She also owned Montessori and ballet schools, where she taught children cultural dances. She has been dancing for 67 years.

JUNE CAMP 2021
Mady Newfield, St. Charles, Illinois

Enthusiasm, euphoria, and inspiration generated at the NFO Conference's fabulous weekend can be re-ignited at the 63rd annual June Camp. We hope you can join us online, June 4-6, 2021. Featured instructors are Lee Otterholt (Balkan) and Penny Brichta (Israeli), plus a bonus hour with Jaap Leegwater (Bulgarian) and Dance Exchange workshops taught by several regional dance leaders. Live music for the dance party will be provided by Tom Pixton and Friends, as well as informal live music for dancing and singing along during Happy Hour and a Half.

As with every dance workshop of 2021, June Camp will be on Zoom. While there is no charge to attend, registration is required. Dance videos will be available at certain donation levels. You can also purchase a commemorative T-shirt. We welcome your participation and look forward to dancing with you June 4-6.

For registration and more information, go to the website: <https://sites.google.com/site/junecampifd/>

You may also find updates on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/junecamp>.

June Camp
June 4-6, 2021 on Zoom

Lee Otterholt Penny Brichta
Tom Pixton & Friends

**SHARE THE JOY OF DANCING
SAFELY TOGETHER AGAIN**
Jan Rayman, La Canada, California

We are thrilled to announce that Fall Camp will take place November 12-14 at the lovely Brandeis-Bardin campus 40 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles, where more than 90 dancers had a wonderful November weekend at Fall Camp 2019. Of course, all of our plans will be formulated with the careful consideration of the well-being of our participants, based on the guidance from health experts. Registration will open this summer. For more information and the latest news, visit FallCamp.org or email Dance@FallCamp.org.

Master teachers Sonia Dion and Cristian Florescu (better known as Sonia and Cristian) will bring their uniquely entertaining teaching of Romanian dances to Fall Camp. They will join master teacher Roberto Bagnoli, who will present a great selection of international dances.

After a very long time of being isolated and having to rely on virtual contact with others, what could be better than a weekend of socializing with your dance friends, lots of dancing, music, many other fun activities, comfortable motel-style rooms, great food, and a beautiful rural campus? Well, to find out, be sure to attend Fall Camp in November!



Alicia LaFetra, Caspar Bik, and Valerie Daley at Fall Camp 2019

SCANDIA CAMP MENDOCINO GOES VIRTUAL FOR 2021

Fred Bialy, El Cerrito, California

Since its founding in 1980, Scandia Camp Mendocino (SCM) has offered a yearly week-long immersive experience in the folk dance and music culture of Scandinavia, primarily of Norway and Sweden. The week includes daily dance and music classes, culture sessions, singing, and craft classes, as well as music ensemble sessions (Allspel) to practice commonly known tunes to play at every evening's dance party. The redwood forest of the Mendocino Woodlands has always provided a magical setting for learning from master teachers from Scandinavia, as well as from American experts. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Scandia Camp Mendocino will go virtual this year, with a shorter, four-day program via Zoom, June 11–14, 2021.



Norway has two main fiddle traditions: the regular fiddle and the unique Hardanger fiddle (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hardanger_fiddle). Gudbrandsdalen (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gudbrandsdalen>) is in the regular fiddle region, and its springleik is very popular among dancers and musicians alike. SCM Virtual will feature springleik in its Norwegian dance sessions taught by Øyvind Sandum and Karin Brandsbol. Astrid Garmo will take charge of the fiddle instruction, as well as offering sessions on the Hardanger fiddle and the traditional singing from Gudbrandsdalen.

Sweden's dance and music traditions are rich and varied and have captured Americans attention, particularly since the release of *Swedish Folk Fiddling by Nonesuch* in the 1960s. Among all the counties in Sweden, Dalarna is known for having a particularly strong folk tradition, where almost every village has its own unique dance and music style. Britt Mari Westholm Dahlgren and Eric Dahlgren will teach some of their favorite dances from Dalarna. Bengt Jonsson, who will be teaching the Swedish music classes, is well-versed in the music of Dalarna and is one of the leaders of his local spelmanslag (musicians'



club). He is also a decorated player of the cow horn, which will be one of the offerings among the many music classes at SCM.

The nyckelharpa, or keyed fiddle, the national folk instrument of Sweden, has been played in Upland for centuries. Its modern form, with four bowed and 12 resonance strings, has captivated musicians throughout Sweden, Scandinavia, and in many parts of the world. Petrus Dillner, steeped in the nyckelharpa folk tradition from a young age and a graduate of the Swedish Royal College of Music, will be at SCM to share his knowledge.

Since the 1970s, America has its own growing group of accomplished Scandinavian musicians and teachers. Among them are Peter Michaelsen, who will lead ensemble classes for commonly known tunes (Allspel), and Loretta Kelley, who is one of the premier American Hardanger fiddlers, as well as a sought-after regular fiddle teacher. She will be offering classes on both instruments. Roo Lester, a highly respected American teacher of Scandinavian dance, will be on hand to help people learn the fundamentals of Scandinavian dancing.



Come and learn more about the richness of Scandinavia's music and dance traditions at SCM Virtual, June 11–14. It's free, but you need to register. To do so, and for more information, go to the SCM website: www.scandiacampmendocino.org.

FOLK DANCE EVENTS NETWORK

Due to COVID-19, events may be virtual. Please refer to the event websites for information.

May 1: CERRITOS FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL, Cerritos, California. Info: CerritosFolkDancers@gmail.com.

May 1: HOOLYEH AND FRIENDS 13th annual folk dance party, 6–10 p.m. Pacific time, via Zoom. Info: hoolyeh.com.

May 15: FINNISH MUSIC WORKSHOP WITH LEIJA LAUTAMAJA, via Zoom, 10 a.m.–noon. PDT. \$25 for Skandia members and \$35 for nonmembers. Register via Paypal payment to Skandia Folkdance Society on the Skandia website: skandia-folkdance.org.

May 22: ONTARIO FOLK DANCE CAMP, virtual, 7–10 p.m. Eastern time. Info: ontariofolkdancecamp.ca.

June 4–6: JUNE CAMP, via Zoom. Info: <https://sites.google.com/site/junecampifd/>.

June 11–14: SCANDIA CAMP MENDOCINO, via Zoom. Info: ScandiaCampMendocino.org.

July 24–31: STOCKTON FOLK DANCE CAMP: Up Close and Personal, via Zoom. Info: folkdancecamp.org.

August 20–22: NORSK FOLKEDANS STEMNE, Poulsbo, Washington. Info: seattlestemne.org.

September 9–19: TOUR TO CZECH REPUBLIC with Folk Arts Center of New England and Dvorana. Info: facone.org.

September 30–October 3: WORLD CAMP, Chicago, Illinois. Info: worldcamp.us

October 9–22: TOUR GREECE AND THE GREEK ISLANDS with Jim Gold and Lee Otterholt. Info: jimgold.com.

November 25–28: TEXA-KOLO, Iroquis Springs, New York. John Filcich Kolo Festival's 70th anniversary. Teachers include Sonia & Cristian and Ahmet Lüleci, plus others TBA. Info: tjfd.org.

December 16–19: NIRKODA BA'KEREM 2021 Israeli dance camp, at Wonder Valley Ranch Resort, Sanger, California (near Fresno). Info: nirkoda.com/bakerem.

2022

March 25–27, 2022: SPRING FESTIVAL and Balkanske Igre's 57th anniversary. Info: balkanskeigre.org.

XXL TOUR TO GEORGIA, ARMENIA and (optional) IRAN

June 2022



Following the successful XXL tour in 2018, Tineke & Maurits van Geel plan to organize a second XXL trip to 3 countries in 2022. It is not the first time we have these countries in our program but we will visit some new territories. We are working hard to make it a wonderful experience.

Would you like to be informed? Sign up for our Newsletter.

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