



November-December 2010

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## Prez Sez

If my life gets any busier, I'll have to go back to work to rest! But I wouldn't have it any other way. October finally ended. Oktoberfest was fun; I loved San Diego and the wedding; receiving my veteran fencing award was a highlight in my life; the contra Fall Ball had a terrific band and caller; and our Fall Fling was terrific!

Many of you signed up for our **Presidents' Weekend 2011** (it's hard not to call it camp) at Fall Fling, and will receive either your free DVD or T-shirt. But if you didn't sign up at the Fling, don't let that stop you from registering as soon as possible. **The deadline for registration is January 10.** If you miss the deadline for registration, you must make your own arrangements for rooms and food and pay ala carte prices for the workshops and parties.

### Venue:

We have changed venues since last "camp". The new venue was announced in the July/August FFD, but it bears repeating. We are still in Kissimmee, still in a hotel, with some more positive points. It will be at the Holiday Inn Main Gate East, 5711 W. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy. (US 192) Kissimmee, Florida. It is all indoors, so we don't have to bother with the weather. The hot tub is more convenient and open into the night. Well, those are the more important points!

**Olga Princi scholarship:** See [Olga Princi Scholarship](#).

### Help! Help! Help!

### Snacks:

The hotel is allowing us to do our own *and* to have them near the dancing (another good change), but they **must** be *ethnic*!

Remember, we are having Greek and Hungarian teachers, so we'll have Hungarian and Greek party nights and the snacks should match. It isn't decided which night is which – Saturday or Sunday – but if you volunteer to do Greek or Hungarian snacks you can have a say in which night.

It would be terrific if your club as a whole would offer to do an evening – pick your country, check the Internet (or your old fashioned cookbooks) for recipes, and put your hand up and offer. Snacks can be snacks. They don't have to be a full meal, with main dishes, or anything. But – they **must** be *ethnic* – not just grapes and cheese. That includes Friday night by the way; that night could be any ethnicity you like – Eastern European, South American, Indian, Asian – whatever! Do I hear any offers?

### Syllabi:

This year the teachers are not sending syllabi (don't ask). But there are those of us who would like them. I would like some volunteers to offer to take notes on one (or more if you are willing) dance, double check with someone else and prepare to write them up for afterwards. Normally we have them ahead of time, and that just isn't happening.

If you are one of the people that like to receive the syllabi, think hard about being a part of the solution. If necessary we can wait for the DVD to come out and double check the dances there, but that may not be necessary if you take good notes. Think hard about helping produce the syllabi. I thank you ahead of time.

## Music:

It works well to have someone help play music while the teacher is teaching, on, off, on, off – you know the drill. If there is someone who is willing to not dance now and then and help with this, please come forward. It could involve a slight discount on your registration if you are very helpful! We would like someone to help with the evening programs as well. It's not nice to make John and Bobby do all the work. We can provide all the music, but would like someone to make up the program for an evening and make sure it is played. This would also involve discounting your registration.

## Officers:

Would you like to be an officer for the next two years? Let me know. If you need details on the "job description" – write me and ask. It's election year!

OK – that's enough requests for this month. I'm looking forward to our usual terrific weekend in February. Ask me why I dance. Ask me why I breathe.

## Olga Princi Scholarship

Each year one or two deserving dancers attend the Presidents' Weekend, courtesy of the Olga Princi Scholarship. Olga Princi was a talented young folk dancer from Daytona Beach whose life was ended by a tragic automobile accident. In her memory, contributions are accepted and a silent auction is held at camp to raise money for this scholarship.

The Olga Princi scholarship is different from work scholarships, in that the scholar is not required to work, but hopefully is someone who is very interested in getting more involved in dancing, may help teach, etc. Usually it's a young person, relatively new to folk dancing, but that is not necessary. Over the years, a variety of people of all ages have benefited from the scholarship. Some have been new to folk dancing, while others have been long time dancers. Some have been potential leaders of a new group.

This scholarship is not necessarily connected to a monetary need. It is a privilege and honor to be nominated. Nominations usually come from leaders of Florida dance groups. You may also make a self nomination. There is no application form. If you are interested or want to nominate someone, please send a note to Terry Abrahams, with a brief description of the applicant's interest in dancing. Describe how the scholarship would encourage that

person to contribute either individually or as a leader to international dance in Florida. Deadline for nominations is January 1, 2011. A maximum of two people will be chosen.

## From the Editor

This issue of the newsletter mixes catching up with the news of summer events with more recent events, like [Fall Fling](#). Summer news that didn't make it into the last issue is in this one.

Once again, Gary and I traveled in the past summer. I wrote about our June trip in the July/August FFD. Later we spent eight weeks in California and Oregon, starting the last week in July when we flew to California to start two weeks at Stockton Folk Dance Camp; see "Stockton Folk Dance Camp" in the September/October issue.

After camp, we headed up to Oregon, where we visited relatives and danced with international dance groups in Eugene and Springfield. The Eugene group is pretty advanced, but small. In Springfield, they teach some easier dances and the group is large and energetic. There are several people who attend both groups. One man in Springfield was someone I had danced with in Houston in the 1980's.

No one from those groups had attended Stockton camp. In fact, they don't seem to have learned very many of the popular new dances going around, such as the ones we learned from Sonia and Cristian, Yves, and Zeljko. Most of their dances were oldies. But I got to do dances I had not done for decades. They did *Dayagim* and *Hora Mamtera*. Do you Israeli dancers remember those? I learned them about 1966. I didn't try to do *Dayagim* – too much jumping for my old legs.

Later in August, we spent a little over a week in the San Diego area, where we went dancing twice. A couple of the dancers there had been at Stockton Folk Dance Camp, so we got to review some Stockton dances. After San Diego, we spent some time with relatives at Cambria, on the California coast north of Santa Barbara. It was cool and sometimes foggy, but the scenery was wonderful and we got to see elephant seals.

After that it was back to Oregon, and more dancing before heading home. We danced in Springfield again and with a Scandinavian dance club in Portland, where we had danced before. It has been very nice to be able to return to the same dance groups several times; we're starting to get to know people out there.



## Trip to Bulgaria, Continued

Not all of the great material produced from the August 2010 Bulgaria trip with Jim Gold made it into the last newsletter, due to lack of space. Some of it spilled over into this issue. Below are more pictures and at right are an article and pictures from one memorable day on the trip.



**The Florida contingent: Bobby Quibodeaux, Pat Henderson, Jack Seltzer, Linda Seltzer, and Sandra Suplicki**



**East meets West: Bulgarians and tourists dancing together at the Koprivshitsa Folk Festival. The woman leading the line is talking on a cell phone!**

*Photo by Pat Henderson*

## Two Hours in Bulgaria

by Jack Seltzer

Out of our eleven days on the Jim Gold Bulgarian tour this summer, there are two hours that really stand out in my mind – in Kovachevitsi village. “Where is this place on the map?” I kept wondering when we left the three-day festival in Koprivshitsa. Well it wasn’t there! I can tell you between which two towns it was approximately, but after 2-3 hours of an unbelievable time there, I really didn’t care anymore. This village was a standout. What an incredible happening we enjoyed with the people there.

When our bus pulled into the quiet plaza on that day (photo above, by Jack Seltzer), we were first greeted by the mayoress and her entourage. There were speeches about how welcome we were and how the town would one day have a Hilton for us to stay at across from where we were standing. Ha! We were going to get, in a few hours, all the hospitality this town had to give to outsiders.

They gave us a performance with six costumed ladies and a Roma boy belting out their hearts in a song. Next we were danced down the street to a villager’s home and back yard, where we given all kinds of delectables (banitsa – a white cheese pastry, for example) that the town’s people had put together for us, and there were at least 52 of us.

Then the entertainment got serious. One of the original Mystery of Bulgarian Voices, Kremena Stancheva, gave us some solos and duets; then the accordion player took off. What sounds and sights under the trees in Kremena’s garden.



**Jack Seltzer, center, with the mayor, to the right of Jack, and other citizens of Kovachevitsi village**

*Photo by Linda Seltzer*

What was next? Well, lots of pictures, hugs and well wishes as they danced us back to the square and serenaded us as we sat on the bus waiting to leave, concluding two unforgettable hours out of eleven fun-filled days in Bulgaria this summer.



**Kremena Stanchova and a musician**

*Photo by Pat Henderson*

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**Andi Kapplin (near left) demonstrating a dance for the crowd – panoramic view (the walls of the hall are not really curved)**

*Photo by Jack Seltzer*

## Flawless Fall Fling

[John Daly, Pat Henderson, Jack Seltzer, Terry Abrahams, and Caroline Lanker contributed to this Fall Fling report.]

**Terry:** Once again Melbourne has given us their annual gift of a perfect Fall Fling.

**Pat:** On October 30, about 50 folk dancers from all around the state gathered in Melbourne to dance. The number was considerably more than in recent years.

**John:** Wow! 45 people signed in. There may have been even more because the sign-in sheet was full.

**Jack:** Linda and I thoroughly enjoyed the Saturday hospitality in Melbourne. After a ride down there with Bobby and Pat, along with Ann, Manuel and his wife, Palmira, we were ready. We could hear the music blaring as soon as we arrived. The little field house they dance in every week was impressive – great wood floors, a speaker system John had installed for the occasion.

**Terry:** As we walked in the door we were greeted by smiling faces, along with decorations announcing the fall season. This year I added some Halloween name tag buttons to the fray.

**Pat:** Caroline was celebrating 50 years of folk dancing and she put together a fabulous program of new and old dances. She had asked for people to send in their first dances that were their favorites. After many responses and her own ingenuity, a great program was created. It is amazing how you can do a dance after several years of not doing it.

**Jack:** We danced continuously (between the meal breaks) from 11 AM to 8:30 PM. We did lots of oldies but goodies, like *Krici Krici Ticek* (haven't done that one in ages – just count to eight) and *Zenjo Makedonska*, a fun easy one. And seeing Julius take off in *Michael's Czardas* – nice.

**Caroline:** Thank you to everyone who came to the Fall Fling and helped me celebrate 50 years of folk dancing. I got some nice compliments on the program, but what really made it click were all the suggestions I received. Several people came through with some good lists of both oldies and other dances. I added a few requests of my own and arranged a program from them. We, collectively, have so many favorite dances that the hard part was deciding what could be left out. We could have gone on for a lot longer without running out of dances, if only our bodies could have held up.



**Linda Seltzer, Jack Seltzer and Arlene Kaufmann, in the center, leading a dance that Linda and Jack reviewed**

*Photo by Terry Abrahams*

**Caroline:** The Melbourne group really went all out with the hospitality. Some of us traveled to Melbourne on Friday evening, danced at their regular Friday night session and then spent Friday night at the homes of some of the Melbourne dancers.

**Jack:** What more could you ask, except real hospitality by all the ladies serving out the lunch and dinner food? Thank you lovely ladies: Bernice, and the two sisters, Willa and Fannie.

I think that including a lot of oldies benefited the program. It seems that the tried and true dances get a lot of people out on the floor. To add some variety at points scattered throughout the day, several people taught new dances, reviewed dances or led walkthroughs of set dances.

**Jack:** It was a good test for my new toe – seven weeks after a toe joint implant. My toe survived, after I took two Aleve around 5 PM.

**Terry:** We did our usual potluck lunch, which just seems to get tastier and tastier – plenty for everyone and yummy! The food committee worked hard to keep us very happy and we thank them again.

**Pat:** This year, we did not have to buy extra food, since there was enough for both lunch and supper. There were so many choices, we could have different dishes at each meal.



**Playing for the dancers: Terry Abrahams, David Davia and John Daly**

*Photo by Jean Marszal*

**Terry:** In between, our little rag-tag “band” went out on that lovely porch and practiced a couple of numbers to be presented to the group. This year David Davia, who played the trumpet, joined John and me – thanks, David! John and I get lonely and the trumpet was a great addition!



**The band played this oldie, among others – can you tell what dance it is?**

*Photo by Jean Marszal*

**Pat:** Thank you to John and the Melbourne group for hosting this wonderful event.

**Terry:** If you missed it, you should be sorry. If you didn't, you were one of the 50ish dancers who had a great day! And those of us who spent the night afterward thank our hostesses for the beds, the company, and the excellent breakfast!

**John:** Anyway, it was a great Fling. The Melbourne group really appreciates everybody coming. It's always a lot of fun.



**Jan Lathi and Julius Horvath enjoying a tête-à-tête**

*Photo by Terry Abrahams*

**Sixty-plus year folk dancer Ann Robinson**

*Photo by Terry Abrahams*



**Caroline Lanker, in center of circle, teaching a dance**

*Photo by Jean Marszal*



**The peanut gallery: Palmira Mora-Vals, Ursula Tison, Gary Lanker, Ernesto Baizan, Joan Washington, and Wally Washington in the front row.**

*Photo by Terry Abrahams*

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## Return of the Bata!

by Pat Henderson and Terry Abrahams

The Weekend of November 5–7 was the annual Serbian Festival held at St. Petka's Serbian Orthodox Church in Longwood (Orlando area). Bata Marcetic (who taught at Florida camp in 2006) had let us know that his group was performing and four of us attended on Saturday evening – Ursula, Terry, Pat and Bobby. In spite of chilly weather, it was as good as last year – even better.

Bata brought an adult performing group from his Academy of Serbian Folk Dancing this year (last year, it was a children's group) and they were just terrific. One could say they are on a par with the Tamburitians – great choreography, great costumes, great variety, great dancers – we couldn't ask for more. Every suite represented a particular region and was danced to perfection.

In between all of that, we got to dance to two lovely bands – the Academy of Serbian Folklore Orchestra and Nenad Todorovic and Zika Antic. Huge groups of people got up to dance – lots of young people. It was a sight for sore eyes, and we had a great time. One of the times that we were waiting for Bata's group to change costumes, Bata recruited Bobby, Pat and Ursula to dance steps his way instead of the way the rest of the Serbs were dancing! (Terry was buying coffee and missed out.) Later, when one of the bands was playing, Bobby and Pat joined a trio left over from the Greek group doing a syrto, since the music was a syrto rhythm. It felt a lot better than doing the lesnoto-type step that the rest were doing.

Couple all of that with good food, including stuffed cabbage, homemade pastries and Serbian beer – well what more could you ask? Oh yes – some personal time with Bata! It was wonderful to see him and his wife; he's always so happy to see us, it makes us warm all over. He sends regards to all and we gave him your love. It must be almost time to have him back at our Presidents' Weekend.

## Atlanta News

by David Digby

The Atlanta folk dancers weren't too active this summer – many folks were traveling. Sara and Jim Osborn just got back from India (as of November 7), and Lillian Bryan was in China in September. Linda and Sid Gordon went to Greece and Israel and also just got back. Liz Noonan was off to a Balalaika Society convention earlier this summer.



Above and below: Bata Marcetic's Academy of Serbian Folk Dancing troupe performing dances from two different regions of Serbia.

Photos by Pat Henderson



## Pinewoods English Country Dance Week

by Bernice Roth

I went to Pinewoods this summer, July 31 – August 7, for the English Country Dance Week. Of all the workshops I have attended, this one was the best. Most of the people who attended were teachers and had their own groups. The dances each evening were just marvelous – very little talking and teaching and lots of fabulous live music to add to the enjoyment of the dance. It is a very rustic camp; many of the cottages do not have bathrooms and you have to use outside ones. That part I did not like, but the food was fabulous, the teachers excellent, and the live music for every workshop session and for the evening dance was so good that it made up for some of the inconveniences. For those of you who like English Country Dance, it is a great experience.

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## Sharpes Assembly

by Caroline Lanker

The English Country Dancers of Melbourne and Titusville hosted the Sharpes Assembly English Country Dance Weekend on October 15 – 17, at the Kenilworth Lodge in Sebring, Florida.

The caller was Michael Barraclough, from Annandale, Virginia. The program included a variety of old and new English Country dances. The traditional ball was held on Saturday evening, for which many people dressed in formal attire or period costumes. Full Circle did a splendid job of providing music, including a medley of a dozen or more pieces for one dance! At least 82 people were signed up ahead of the weekend.

The weekend was organized by Melbourne ECD dancers and Florida Folk Dance Council members Catie Geist, Bernice Roth, Fannie Salerno and Willa Davidsohn. Other FFDC members who attended were Ruth Ann Fay, Delores Lusting, Virginia Marszal, Caroline Lanker and Gary Lanker.



Fannie Salerno, on left, and other dancers

Photo by Caroline Lanker



Sharpes Assembly, above: top row: Catie Geist; Gary and Caroline Lanker; second row: Michael Barraclough; Ruth Ann Fay, center, with other dancers; third row: Full Circle band – Veronica Lane; Robbie Zukauskas; Ted Lane

Photos: of Catie by Thomas Howe; of Gary and Caroline by Delores Lustig; others by Caroline Lanker



Dressed for the ball: from left: Bernice Roth, Fannie Salerno, Virginia Marszal, Willa Davidsohn, Delores Lustig, and Caroline Lanker.

Photo by Jean Marszal

Videos of dancing at the Sharpes Assembly can be viewed on YouTube at the following addresses:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAK0n6PbsiY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAK0n6PbsiY)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7AVo3UfKCA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7AVo3UfKCA)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=37q3zWM8w8M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37q3zWM8w8M)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BGN5ZHxcsI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BGN5ZHxcsI)

Additional photographs taken by photographer Thomas Howe may be viewed at

[www.flickr.com/photos/thomas\\_h1/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/thomas_h1/)

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## A Tale of Two Workshops

by Pat Henderson

Bobby and I enjoyed ten glorious days in western North Carolina, September 2-12. We attended Karmiel USA in Highlands over Labor Day weekend with Dany Benshalom and Ruthy Slann and then went to Mountain Playshop in Black Mountain with Jim Gold the following weekend.

Karmiel USA was at a new venue, "The Mountain". The drive up to the camp was very steep. We danced in a building called the Treehouse, since the wooden dance floor was located on the second floor. It was about a two minute walk to our cabin through a trail with trees and bushes on both sides. The dining hall was connected to the Treehouse via a wooden boardwalk through the woods. With temperatures in the 40s at night and highs of less than 70, it was a great dance weekend, with open windows in the dance hall.

The food was the most incredible for a camp, with an outright chef and their own garden. We had salmon, herb-crusted chicken, acorn squash and asparagus, just to name a few of the many delights. It turns out that the chef is the husband of Suzanne Whitehead (her family name) and she works in the office for the camp. Suzanne's parents, Cubby and Jeanie Whitehead were two of the founders of FFDC. It truly is a small world. Dany and Ruthy, along with some guest teachers, taught some very nice dances that we want to keep. Mary Turlington from Atlanta taught *Florica*, as they add an international dance once in a while.

When Karmiel USA ended, Bobby and I stayed in the Highlands area for two nights. We camped one night in our van at Van Hook National Campground and again it was in the 40s. The next night we stayed in a very nice hotel called Mitchell's, with a hot tub in an enclosed gazebo overlooking a stream. We found several waterfalls – Dry Falls, Bridal Veil Falls, Glen Falls and the big one, Whitewater – very close to Highlands. After a night in Franklin and a visit to Ruby City, we headed to Asheville, where we went to the Arboretum, and then down the road to the Linville Cave before we headed to Black Mountain for Playshop.

This year was the 25th anniversary of Mountain Playshop. They had changed both the venue and the date, which previously was in the summer. The location was the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly, which resembles a college campus.

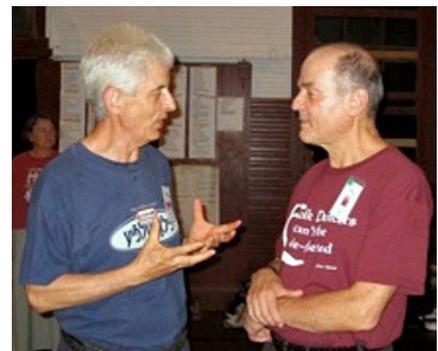
We were there with other groups and were scattered among a small lodge and several cabins, which seemed like homes built in the 1920s or 30s. Bobby and I stayed in one of those that was up the hill, almost at the boundary of the property. It took us two days to figure out that we could walk faster, with shortcuts, than driving!

The attendance for the workshop was more than double last year's number; it looks as if the new venue and date appealed to many. It was our first time to be there the entire weekend. The dancing took place in a very old building they called the gym, which was about two stories up. It was so old that it did not have indoor plumbing, so we had to walk to the new gym next door for the restrooms. However, the facility was just large enough for our 100+ dancers.

The evening programs were pre-programmed, although requests were taken. They even projected the play list on a screen, so we knew all the dances coming up. It was great to dance with such a large crowd again. It has been quite a few years since our camp broke 100. Jim taught about ten dances between Friday night and Saturday and then there was a review on Sunday. Jim has one dance to some great Bulgarian music that won the best song from the Pirin region five years ago at Koprivshitsa. We are working on that dance and a few others to introduce to the Florida dance community. I have heard that they have reserved the same location for next year, the weekend after Labor Day.



**Andi Kapplin,  
Charlene Heaton,  
Terry Abrahams at  
Karmiel USA Israeli  
dance camp.**



**Jim Gold (on right)  
and Eric Bendix at  
Mountain Playshop**

## Orlando International Folk Dance Club

by Pat Henderson

Our club danced every Wednesday in October thanks to a record rainfall of zero for the month for Orlando. That beat the old record of 0.1 inch from 1946. The first Wednesday, we celebrated Bobby's birthday and also had our annual Oktoberfest. Terry came over from Tampa and composed a song for him while she was driving. She and Kelly performed it; the lyrics are on the right.

Of course, we had our annual Halloween party on October 27. Several from our group attended the Fall Fling in Melbourne which was absolutely wonderful. See [Flawless Fall Fling](#). We have not seen that many dancers at a fling in a long time. Bobby and I enjoyed the Orlando Serb Fest on November 6. Bata Marcetic brought his adult group from Toronto. See [Return of the Bata](#).

A few dancers traveled recently: Nicki Wise and her husband were in the North Carolina mountains and Phyllis Dammer and her husband Ed enjoyed a week in a timeshare in Palm Coast. Bobby and I joined them on Thursday, Nov. 4 and we danced with the Palm Coast group.

Mary Jean Linn reports that she and her husband Bill Byars took some family trips over the summer. One was to the Chicago area for Bill's niece's wedding. On an east coast trip to New York they danced with folk dancers and contra dancers in Richmond, Virginia. She also attended her nephew's wedding in Portland Oregon.

Kelly Fagan has spent most of her fall preparing for and performing the part of Mrs. Lovett in the play *Sweeney Todd: the Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. It ran October 29 – November 14 at the Athens Theatre in Deland. On Sunday, November 7, a group of us from various cities in Central Florida met for lunch and then attended the play. Kelly was fantastic in a large and difficult role; we all enjoyed the play and seeing her in it. Kelly and a few of her fans are seen in the photo below.



Photo by Pat Henderson

After the play: Fred Schockey, Betty Nehemias, Kelly Fagan (in costume and makeup for her role as Mrs. Lovett), Jan Lathi, Claudia Terrence, Caroline Lanker, and Ruth Ann Fay.

## Bobby's 65<sup>th</sup>

by Terry Abrahams

[To the tune of "If I Only Had a Brain" from the Wizard of Oz]

You have finally reached the age where  
You're eligible for medicare,  
'cause now you're sixty-five

You can have an operation  
Even when you're on vacation  
As long as you're alive

There is this big advantage  
It's not just an old adage  
It's OK to grow old

It don't cost you any money  
Either you or your honey  
It is just as you've been told

You can have a heart attack  
Or get a bad infection in your eye  
You'll always get your money back  
Unless – of course you die

But for now just keep on dancin'  
With Pat keep on romancin'  
Good luck from us all here

Have a happy, happy birthday  
Making sure it's full-of-mirth day  
And we'll do it again next year!



October 6 party in Orlando: in front: Bobby Quibodeaux and Terry Abrahams; behind: Ruth Ann Fay, Gary Lanker, Jan Lathi, Manual Mora-Vals, Palmira Mora-Vals, Caroline Lanker, Betty Nehemias, Emilie Brozek, Chick Hechtman, Phyllis Dammer, Karen Hechtman (hiding behind Ann), Ann Robinson, Juanita Schockey, Kelly Fagan, Pat Henderson

Photo by Ed Dammer

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## Fifty Plus Years of Dancing

by Caroline Lanker

Fall Fling was, in part, my celebration of 50 years of dancing. I'll tell my story of how I got involved in folk dance in a bit. But first, let's hear from some other long-time dancers. Several other people who were at Fall Fling also started folk dancing more than 50 years ago. They include Julius Horvath, who started in the 1950's, and Ann Robinson, who has been dancing for over 60 years. Some others have provided their stories (below) of how they started dancing and why they are still doing it. Andi Kaplin has been folk dancing for 62 years. Melbourne dancers Willa Davidsohn and her sister Fannie Salerno both wrote about how they started folk dancing together in the 1940's, then left folk dancing and went their separate ways for years, later to return to folk dancing together again in Melbourne, FL.

### Andi Kaplin:

As a child, I was in a youth group at my synagogue and Israeli dancing was part of our activities. The year was 1948, the year Israel became a country. When I was a teenager, still in the same youth group, I would attend conventions where members from throughout the states would get together. One of the competitions between the clubs was Israeli dancing. I'm proud to say our Jacksonville, FL group won first place a lot of times.

When I was in college I worked as a counselor at the youth group's summer camp in Hendersonville, NC and continued to participate in Israeli dancing. In 1965 I attended my first Israeli dance workshop held at Camp Blue Star in Hendersonville, NC. International dancing was included as part of the evening dance parties, and that's where I discovered that. When I returned to Atlanta, GA where I was working, I joined the Atlanta international folk dance group.

What drew me to folk dancing is what keeps me doing it: it's fun, it makes me happy and you meet lots of wonderful people; it helps you stay fit and is good for your brain! What a combination of great things!

Through the years I have continued to dance whenever possible. While living in Springfield, Illinois, where there was no dance group, I started a small international group and continued to attend the Blue Star Israeli workshops each summer. For the most part (for a few years it may have been more off than on), I have continued to dance for 62 years!

### Willa Davidsohn:

In the late 1940's, I was in New York City attending Parson's School of Design. Fannie was in high school at the time. There was a YMHA a block or two from our house. First we took ballroom dancing there and then we tried folk dancing. As we enjoyed the folk dance class, we branched out and tried some other folk dance groups in the city. It was at a dance group on the lower East side that I met my husband. We continued folk dancing, then also attending Michael Herman's class, for the next five months.

I married in 1949 and we went to a training camp in California and then to Israel for a couple of years, where my first child was born. Aside from some very limited folk dancing in Israel, I didn't dance again until the 1980's when I learned of John Daly's folk dance class in Melbourne.

### Fannie Salerno:

I guess you can say Willa and I started dancing in high school. In the 40's, we lived in New York City at 89th St. and Lexington Ave. The nearby YMHA was super for dancing – ballroom and modern and folk dance. I broke my coccyx when a 250 lb. Swedish-American landed on my lap instead of vice-versa in a dance.

Willa discovered folk dancing in the village with Mary Anne and Michael Herman. He drank Coca-cola the whole time we were dancing. I joined her in dancing there, also. It seems that was mostly Balkan and Israeli with some Scandi that was not what we know as Scandi today.

Then I went off to school and Willa left New York, too. After that, I got married and didn't dance except for doing the one-step my husband used for 48 years. When my Charles died, Willa invited me to join her dance groups and I was in Heaven. I had just finished a bout with cancer and the dancing was a psychological life saver. I didn't know what Scottish or English Country was but loved dancing them. I went happily back to international folk dancing to find I was having a hard time remembering anything but *Miserlou*, but persevered until most people will dance next to me. Of course, dancing seems to provide wonderful friends, a sense of community and concern for each other that radiates from the dancing. And of course, we know there is no dancer who cannot cook.

[The cooking part seems to be true in Melbourne, at least – Ed]

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## Caroline Lanker:

I started college at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, NM in the fall of 1960, knowing not a soul there. I very soon became friends with some other girls in my dormitory who were from Los Alamos, NM and had been folk dancing while they were in high school. They found out about a folk dance club that met at the YMCA in downtown Albuquerque and got some boys who had cars to provide the transportation for all of us to go there. I loved it. The existing folk dance club consisted of "older" people – probably in their 30s and 40s. The infusion of us college "kids" kind of energized the group. I continued to dance there throughout my undergraduate years.

I have danced pretty continuously ever since, only missing about two years – once when I was in graduate school where there was no folk dancing available and one of the years when I had a baby. (My other two pregnancies didn't keep me from dancing.) After my first marriage ended in divorce, when I was a single parent with three kids, folk dancing was my main and almost only social activity. Gary and I met at folk dancing in Houston, Texas in 1985. We married in 1989. Many folk dancers attended our wedding and we had folk dancing at the reception.

Now, fifty years after I started, I can't dance as long and as hard as I used to, but I still love it. Folk dancing provides such a wide variety of ways to enjoy it – dancing for all tastes and abilities!



**Judy Merkt,  
dressed for  
Halloween, at the  
Sarasota  
Grapeviners on  
October 27.**

*Photo by Gary Lanker*

## Tampa Trivia

by Terry Abrahams

It's hard to believe I have nothing to say, but have I ever missed getting an article in the newsletter about Tampa? OK – there was one time, but there was an excuse. So, a brief hello from Tampa. We loved seeing everyone at the wonderful Fall Fling. (See [Flawless Fall Fling](#).) Melbourne does a terrific job – it is always a pleasure to go there. Ursula and I got over to Orlando to see Bata and his adult group perform at the Serb Fest, and it was well worth the trip. (See [Return of the Bata](#).) He's such a sweetie – and talented besides! There was an article about the Oktoberfest we all went to in St. Pete in the last issue of FFD.

Being an international folk dancer really opens up great activities, does it not? On November 11, I went to a Kirtan, which is singing for yoga people. Very nice and added to my list of new things tried. There was no fencing (Veterans Day), so I could go to the Kirtan – priorities after all. So this short article got a little longer. Hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving!

## Sarasota Grapeviners

by Judy Merkt

The Sarasota Grapeviners have temporarily lost the use of the Bayfront Community Center for our Wednesday sessions. The water heater went bad and leaked lots of water, ruining the wood floor. The water heater and wood floor are being replaced.

In the meantime, we danced at Bay Village, a community near Sarasota Square Mall that has a lovely room with a small portable wood floor, on Saturday nights, November 6 and November 20. We will be dancing there again on the first three Saturday nights in December – December 4, 11, and 18, at the usual time – 7 to 9:30 PM.

Estimates are that the Bayfront Community Center will be available for Wednesday, December 22, but we won't know for sure until we are closer to that date.

Each person who comes to dance at Bay Village must be on an attendee list for each date they attend. So, if you plan to attend any of the December dates, let one of us know even if you have already been on the list for a prior date.

Contact information:

Judy Merkt 941-379-6302 [jamerkt@comcast.net](mailto:jamerkt@comcast.net)

Susan Barach 941-923-3302 [hbarach@aol.com](mailto:hbarach@aol.com)

Marie Millett 941-966-8250 [gvdurn@earthlink.net](mailto:gvdurn@earthlink.net)

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## Holiday Party Plans

Several of our folk dance groups are planning parties during the holiday season.

### **Wednesday, December 8 Orlando Birthday Party**

Pat and Bobby will host a celebration for Kelly Fagan's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. The festivities will start with a pot luck dinner at 6:30 PM, followed by the regular Orlando club dance at 7:30 PM. Kelly requests that attendees wear international costumes or ethnic dress if possible. For more information, contact Pat Henderson: 407-275-6247, [Henderp@bellsouth.net](mailto:Henderp@bellsouth.net).

### **Wednesday, December 15 Orlando Holiday Party**

The Orlando club will celebrate the season at its regular weekly dance, starting at 7:30 PM. (Bobby decided that two pot lucks in a row would be too much.) Please bring finger food to share. Wear your holiday outfits. See contact information for Orlando above.

### **Saturday, December 18 Flagler Beach/Palm Coast**

The Flagler Beach/Palm Coast dancers will host a Christmas party on December 18th, 2-8 PM, at their regular dancing place, and invite any FFDC dancers to join them. They will not dance on Thursday that week (December 16th). Bring finger food and/or drinks to share and a list of your favorite dances. If you need directions, call Jan (386-447-8396) or email ([amarjan1@bellsouth.net](mailto:amarjan1@bellsouth.net)). We hope to see many of you there!

### **December 31 – January 1 New Year's Dance with Esther Mazor**

This gala event includes dancing, meals and a room at the Embassy Suites, 661 NW 63rd St., Boca Raton, FL. Dancing starts at 10 AM, December 31 and ends at 1 PM January 1. The price is \$200. Contact: 561-488-0664, [sandytmazor@yahoo.com](mailto:sandytmazor@yahoo.com).

### **December 31 Gainesville New Year's Eve Party**

The Gainesville International Folk Dance Club will hold a New Year's Eve party at John and Becky Ward's house, 7:30 PM to after midnight. Yes, there will be dancing! Bring pot luck snacks and refreshments. Contact Jack Seltzer at 352-359-2903 for details.

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## Letters

[Jaap Leegwater sent the following note regarding the memorial for Dennis Boxell in the September/October Florida Folk Dancer, which included Jaap's recollections and some photos he supplied.]

Thank you for sharing the result with me. It came out really nice and does great justice and honor to Dennis. I am so glad you shared our memories with the folk dance audience. Thank you for doing that.

Many regards to the Florida Folk Dancers and board. I am enjoying a renewed interest in my teachings in North America and have been on many major camps in the past two years. This has inspired me to re-issue some of my earlier dances and Golden Oldies on CD as well as introducing a new program I recently recorded with Bulgarian musicians and a singer in Europe. In the article of your newsletter I read that it was in the 80's when I last taught at your February camp in Florida. Hard to believe how time flies. I would love to share and teach my new programs with the Florida dancers as well, and would be honored with a return to your state and/or camp in the near future.

Fond regards,  
Jaap

## Holland America Cruise January 30

by Pat Henderson

Phyllis Dammer and her family are going on a one week Western Caribbean cruise on a Holland America ship out of Tampa January 30 to February 6, 2011, to celebrate her husband Ed's 90th birthday. She has invited members of the Orlando group and now any member of FFDC to join them. The ports of call are: Key West, Belize City, Roatan (Honduras) and Costa Maya, Mexico. If you are interested, call Dave Wilson at 816-531-0100. As of September 25, an ocean view cabin was \$681 including tax and port charges. Check current prices before booking. Bobby and I and some other Orlando dancers are going. If there are enough dancers, we may be able to get a room to dance when there is no conflict with other activities.

## Dance Videos on the Web

Ensemble Moiseev:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2mkzwlr6HU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2mkzwlr6HU)

Roma: [www.guitarsolos.com/videos-romafest-gypsy-dance-theater-verbunk-%5BTYql6qfPdd4%5D.cfm](http://www.guitarsolos.com/videos-romafest-gypsy-dance-theater-verbunk-%5BTYql6qfPdd4%5D.cfm)

Swan Lake by the Great Chinese State Circus:  
[www.nzwide.com/swanlake.htm](http://www.nzwide.com/swanlake.htm)

## Events

See FFDC club events in [Holiday Party Plans](#) and [Holland America Cruise January 30](#).

Be sure to check the FFDC calendar on [www.folkdance.org](http://www.folkdance.org) for updates and more event listings!

## December

### December 24 – 27 Machol Miami 2010

Israeli dance workshop

Teachers: Dudu Barzilay and Yaron Malichi

Place: Sheraton Ft. Lauderdale Airport Hotel  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Contact: 305-690-4343, [dancemiami@hotmail.com](mailto:dancemiami@hotmail.com)

Information: [www.macholmiami.com](http://www.macholmiami.com)

## 2011

## February - March

### February 18 – 21 FFDC Presidents' Weekend

Teachers: Kyriakos Moisisdis (Greek) & Rico Balazs (Hungarian)

Place: Holiday Inn Main Gate East, Kissimmee, FL

Contact: Terry Abrahams, 813-234-1231,  
[terry.abrahams@verizon.net](mailto:terry.abrahams@verizon.net)

Information and registration form:  
[www.folkdance.org](http://www.folkdance.org)

See [Prez Sez](#) for more information.

### Duquesne University Tamburitzans in Florida

For more dates in Florida and other information, visit the Tamburitzans' website:  
[www.duq.edu/tamburitzans](http://www.duq.edu/tamburitzans).

### February 26 & 27 Leesburg

Times: 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM, both days  
Paul P Williams Auditorium, Leesburg, FL  
Contact: Erin O'Steen, 352-365-3506

### March 1 Sarasota

Time: 7:00 PM  
Glenridge Performing Arts Center Sarasota, FL  
Contact: 941-552-5325

### March 5 Daytona Beach

Time: 4:00 PM  
Atlantic High School, Daytona Beach, FL  
Contact: 386-760-9623

## April

### April 2 FFDC Spring Fling and Orlando International Folk Dance Club 40th Anniversary

Time: 11:30 AM – 7 PM

Place: Whirl & Twirl Square Dance Hall, Orlando, FL

Contact: Pat Henderson, 407-275-6247,  
[henderp@bellsouth.net](mailto:henderp@bellsouth.net)

Information: [www.folkdance.org](http://www.folkdance.org), Calendar of Events

### International Folk Dance Tours

*Selected tours are listed in each newsletter. A more extensive list of tours can be found in the calendar on the FFDC website. This section includes one tour from each of four tour leaders or companies. To see additional tours that are offered in 2011, visit their websites.*

## 2011

### January 12 – 26 Dance on the Water Cruise – Egypt

Dance leader Lee Otterholt  
7 day land tour, 7 day Nile cruise

Offered by Berkeley Travel  
Contact: Mel Mann, 510-526-4033,  
[meldancing@aol.com](mailto:meldancing@aol.com)

Information: [www.folkdanceonthewater.org](http://www.folkdanceonthewater.org)

### April 27 – May 18 Central America and the Panama Canal Cruise with Karl Finger

Half-cruise itineraries also available

Contact: 413-528-2963, [finger@bcn.net](mailto:finger@bcn.net)  
Information: [www.fingerfolk.com](http://www.fingerfolk.com)

### May 8 – 18 Sicily and Southern Italy with Jim Gold

Information on all Jim Gold tours: [www.jimgold.com](http://www.jimgold.com)  
Contact: Jim Gold International, 497 Cumberland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666; 201-836-0362,  
[jimgold@jimgold.com](mailto:jimgold@jimgold.com)

### May 8 – 20 Dance Tour to Armenia

Sponsored by Armenia Holiday and Tineke van Geel - Seminars

Contact: Tineke van Geel, [info@TinekevanGeel.nl](mailto:info@TinekevanGeel.nl)  
Information: [www.tinekevanGeel.nl](http://www.tinekevanGeel.nl) and  
[www.armeniaholiday.com](http://www.armeniaholiday.com)

*Please note: The Florida Folk Dancer prints information on folk dance tours, camps and other events that may be of interest to our readers. This does not imply an endorsement or recommendation of any tour or camp (except our own FFDC events!).*

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#### FLORIDA FOLK DANCER

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FFDC Website: [www.folkdance.org](http://www.folkdance.org)