

Florida Folk Dancer

A Newsletter of the Florida Folk Dance Council, Inc.

January 2004

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Ann Kessler, ANNIE8@aol.com

My dear Companions in Dance -

Registration for Camp is coming along nicely, but we haven't heard from you????

Since mailings have been a little slower than usual due to the very busy holidays, an earlier mailing for January is going out shortly. We have extended the offers for all those perks for early registration to **January 20th** instead of the 15th to make up for our lost time. So hurry and get your registration to J.P. Miller (address on mast head) and your membership fee, if you have not already done so (\$15.00 for single membership and \$20.00 for family - two adults living at the same address).

And speaking of FFDC Camp, we have three enthusiastic Olga Princi scholarship students and two work scholarship registrants. Welcome to them. The ONLY disappointing news about camp is that we were unable to fulfill the dream of a "soft" floor for dancing. Will go into detail only to explain all avenues ventured. I don't believe that Terry Abrahams ever did her homework as thoroughly in schools she did for this project. She sought out, and obtained, every detail for a portable wood floor down to the last nail - the exact size and price and the needs for everything. I had obtained very gracious permission from the Camp on storage of the wood floor and permission of extra days today and then lift the floor after use. It would have cost us under \$5000.00. But the real draw back came with needing professional help to lay and lift the floor (too big a job for volunteers in spite of the "carpentry" talents of some of our dancers), and also because of the possibility of the many pitfalls that befell others in this same attempt. Although some dance groups have been successful at this, it is just too expensive

and risky attempt for us - especially when we don't even own the premises for which the floor is needed.

And as far as renting a floor that would REALLY be adequate, and the only one who could have possibly done that is not even available for the date of our camp, the price there is also prohibitive -- \$3,500.00 a year!

The other alternative was the suggestion of a "Pergo" floor, which is a tile that looks like wood but has a very soft backing, which would be the second best to a raised wooden floor, and would also be permanent floor in which we were in hopes that the camp might share some of the expense. Terry hounded Home Depot and I, Lowes. We both came up with the staggering figure, for the size room we needed, and for the labor that would be needed to install it - between \$12,000 and 24,000! We tried - particularly Terry! Our only hope now is one of those Angels who back Broadway shows - anyone know anyone???

But this will ABSOLUTELY have no effect on the wonderful time that is in store for us all. Have heard from the Dynamic Duo (Jim Gold and Lee Otterholt) and the dances they have prepared are unbelievably delightful (including a couple of charming couple dances from Norway from Lee). The concert with Jim will not only appeal to your classical soul, but there will be tons of humor mixed in with his genius for guitar (gaida) and voice. He is not only long legs and feet! And both their genius for exuberant spontaneity at our cultural hours will also delight. A year NOT TO MISS!

Have written so much, but Valentine's Day is coming up with some suggestions for "love" dances. For Israeli - anything with Ahavah in it (love) or Ahavat (for the love of). Serbian dances praising beautiful women (what else), like Davorike Daijke; Savilla Se Bela Loza

(lovers wrapped around each other like vines): Macedonian/Croatian: Moj Dragane (My Sweetheart...); Moj Maro; Verni Se Verni (Come back, Come back "My Lover"); Bulgarian: Oj Devojice: And, of course, any of the romantic couple dances like Kujawiak or Alexandrovsky. Oh - and an old time favorite Israeli dance of mine - "Kvar"! (NOT the one where you yawn and go to sleep, but the REAL one where "lovers want just one minute more").

See you on the dance floor, and hopefully on the FFDC Camp floor - Ann Kessler

REFLECTIONS ON DANCE

by Dan Lampert <dan@webuniv.com>

If you have a digital camera, or plan to get one soon, this article will be of interest. My brother loaned me his digital camera for parts of November and December 2003, and I had fun photographing folk dancers. Here's why...

The main advantage of digital photography in the folk dancing world is seeing the pictures immediately (on the little color display). This means you can tell if the dancers look OK or not. You know, folk dancers move around quickly sometimes! My Cajun friend Bobby Quibodeaux is a very motivated dancer, and he's frequently hopping, turning, and directing people with one arm (like a conductor). His efforts are greatly appreciated by his fellow dancers, but they can be hard to catch on film. When I used a digital camera to photograph him, I could see right away if he was facing the camera, and if everyone was smiling.



Another advantage of digital photography is taking pictures from the ceiling or ground-level. Example: the digital camera that I used had a display what swiveled. So, I could hold up the camera over my head, point it at dancers, and I could still see the display. The result looks like I needed a ladder to stand on...



Alternatively, I can sit on a chair (along side the dance floor) and hold the camera near the floor. While pointing the camera at dancers from this position, I tilt the color display upward and I can still see what's going on. This creates a "hero shot" -- a term from filmmaking. People look larger than life and dramatic in a "hero shot".



I hope you can use these ideas. Remember to take your digital camera to your next folk dancing event... and bring it to camp also in February! Copies of digital pictures are welcome in my email inbox! -- Dan Lampert

ISRAELI DANCE WORKSHOP

By: Debbie Meitin <dmeitin@cfl.rr.com>

The Orlando Israeli Dance Workshop will feature Dany Benshalom, March 27 and 28, 2004. Saturday night 7:30PM to 11:30PM and Sunday 8:30AM to 7PM. Location - JCC of Greater Orlando in Maitland. Contact Debbie Meitin at 407/788-7277 or dmeitin@cfl.rr.com for further information.

ORLANDO INT'L FOLK DANCE CLUB

By: Pat Henderson

Our Hawaiian travelers, the Schockkeys and the Washingtons, returned safely from their cruises around Hawaii. They were on different cruises close to the same time. The Washingtons saw a lot of rain and Joan returned with an unwanted pest -- the flu.

In other news, Bobby had laproscopic hernia surgery on December 18th and he danced almost all the dances at the Chanukah party at Israeli dance on December 22. I guess you would say that his recovery was speedy!

Our club did not dance on December 24 and 31 because of the holidays so we enjoyed catching up on January 7. We seemed to talk more than we danced especially since it was the full moon.

Several members of our group traveled together to Winter Haven to see the Tamburitzans on January 2. They were performing at Polk Community College in a very spacious auditorium. The show was outstanding this year. They have two violin players that make the instrumental numbers fantastic. The selections this year were fun to watch and the costumes were fantastic. They ended with an Armenian piece that featured some of music from dances of our last Tom Bozigian workshop. If you missed their tour this month, they will be back in March. Check their schedule which was published in the November newsletter.

I have received many reservations to my big birthday/retirement party on Saturday, January 24. If you would like to come, we will be doing a

lot of dancing and eating gumbo that Bobby has promised to make! Dancing begins at 2pm. Again, my contact information is 407-275-6247 or henderp@bellsouth.net. We have plenty of RV and tent space along with a few beds and sleeping bag space indoors for the out-of-towners.

GREETINGS FROM GAINESVILLE!

Raluca's trip to Pennsylvania and her dancing in Harrisburg went previously unrelated, so for lack of December happenings I'll talk a little about it. The Harrisburg group sends regards to Esther Gunning (extra regards from Sylvia), who danced for more than 10 years with them and now dances with the Gainesville group. I found in Harrisburg things that I was expecting: a friendly group of people, great enjoyment of dance at all levels of difficulties, a shortage of young and/or male folkdancers. I have also found surprising things: all the music played in Harrisburg was in MP3 format, most people didn't know the name of the dances or where they came from (they were very quick in associating tunes with steps, though), there was no teaching at all or board for writing requests (no breaks in the music either) and they did more diverse dances than what I've seen in Gainesville, Atlanta, New Orleans or at the camp. In fact, on the evening of my visit, apart from old time favorites they did a dance from Ecuador, about 3 Armenian dances I haven't seen before, and two Bhangra numbers (Bhangra is a very energetic dance form of dance from N. India, Punjabi area; you might be able to see it at the camp, that is if we can drag down Josan and Aman, the 2 guys that dance with us, schoolwork permitting; an excellent site on dances of Punjab is

<http://punjabgovt.nic.in/Culture/cul27.htm>

Looking forward to January: on Wed. January 28, as part of People Awareness Week, an annual event on UF campus, the Gainesville group organizes an African Dance evening with Noni Ojouba. We had Noni teaching for us in Spring and we can highly recommend her. Competing with our usual dance, on Friday

January 30th there is a Greek social. Less formal than the October event, this one still calls for dancing, see the events listing for details.



NEWS ON AMAR LATHI

by Jan Lathi

Written on Christmas Eve....

Hi, everyone,

Amar is continuing to do well with radiation and chemo. Six down and twenty-four treatments to go! Below are some observations from Christmas Eve in Radiation Oncology at Brigham and Women's Hospital:

ANGELS, EVERY ONE

Two women chat amicably about their families over coffee in the crowded waiting room. One wears a red cloche-type hat with an enormous antique pin glittering in the overhead light. Her companion nods her turbaned head in agreement on some point.

A young woman, decked out in a kerchief tied in the back of her head, leafs through a travel magazine as she awaits her time on a machine.

In another section of the room sits a bald man in a wheel chair. He and his wife diligently work on one of the puzzles which are consistent works-in-progress. In the pediatric waiting room, a young teenage boy sits smiling at his younger siblings. His white baseball cap, brim backward, boasts a favorite ball team. His round face, bloated from medication, radiates pleasure and optimism because his treatment is almost over.

Countdowns are a thing in common with all these people. Daily, congratulations are expressed to those who have graduated from their treatment program. Folks from all walks of

life (an MIT professor, a professional chef who has written 6 cookbooks, a retired couple from Florida - both coming for follow-up treatment) sit with optimistic smiles looking forward to the next thing in their lives. People share their Christmas plans and issue greetings for grand holidays.

Radiation Oncology caregivers are massive dispensers of TLC -- they are consistently pleasant, patient and upbeat for their patients. Nothing is denied; all is positive. They are angels, every one.

And the cloche, turban, kerchief, ball cap, shiny dome, and all the other head gear prominent in the radiation waiting room, are the halos life has given to some pretty remarkable living angels. God bless them, every one!

-- Jan Lathi Christmas Eve, 2003

A letter from Jan to Kathy on New Year's Eve...

Hi, Kathy,

I managed to get someone to be the reporter from Fairway's Edge so that is covered. Whew! Amar has had his 9th radiation treatment and the affects are taking its toll. He is feeling week and tired; his right leg has developed a "drop"; therefore his Decadron dose has been raised from 1 per day to 8 per day which makes him Decadron dependent - not a good neurological sign. It is saddening to watch the man I knew just a few months ago turn into a very dependent little boy. He is not able to make any decisions for himself and gets frustrated just deciding what pants to wear or whether he should take a nap or not. His appetite is enormous due to the steroids but he is not gaining weight. Diana and family were here last week for 6 days, Rob will come on Jan. 3, and Steve arrives on Jan. 6.

The New Year yawns ahead of us - we are so hopeful that we (literally) can make it through 2004. We will ask the oncology doctor next week what his prognosis is. All prayers and positive energies are so very much appreciated from all who have promised those things.

The current treatments are hard for all of us but we remain optimistic that miracles do happen and that each day is a gift to be cherished. We wish you all a very Happy New Year full of wonderful things and especially

good health for we have a new understanding of just what that means. Blessings to everyone.

-- Amar and Jan

ST PETE DANCING

by Pat Henderson

The **Snow Ball** is Jan. 23-25 in the St. Pete area sponsored by the Tampa Friends of Old Time Dance with the website:

<http://www.billdudley.com/snowball.html>

HUNGARIAN COSTUMES

<http://www.hunmagyar.org/hungary/costumes/for-sale/index.html>

I do lots of searching on internet..this comes in handy...might help some of you..

<http://www.mts.net/%7ejinks/fd/menu.htm>

From Joy joy077@webtv.net

TAMPA TALKS by Terry Abrahams

<terry.abrahams@verizon.net>

Happy New Year Everyone! Hope you had terrific holidays, ate a lot, danced it off, got or gave terrific gifts, made good new year resolutions, etc. I performed with the St. Pete Israeli group on NY Eve at the First Night in St. Pete and the performance went very well. Then I went walking with some friends, they decided to leave at 10:00, I decided to stay, heard some salsa music, went tripping up the steps to find the source, tripped big time, hurt my knee -- really bad. I've been icing ever since and hope by camp time I'll be able to dance - please! This weekend our fencing club hosted a very nice tournament, since I was mostly the organizer, I hobbled around and did o.k. I even had to fence in the women's (to make enough people), just stood there, didn't move, and took 2nd!!!! Old age and treachery....I loved it! Saturday night after the tournament, I headed over to Tarpon Springs in hopes of getting a ticket for the Tammies (Tamburitzens, a famous folk dance group from Duquesne University in Pittsburg, for you new to folk dancing), hit lucky and got a

ticket, walked in to find Andy Pollock, Annie and Fred and Nancy from Sarasota. We didn't embarrass ourselves by dancing in the aisles, but we wanted to! The costuming was amazing, the musicians equally so, the dancing exhausting - oh to be young again. If you've never seen this group, DO IT!

Over break time I did do 2 days of Machol Miami, which is a good thing to do if you've not got lots of other things to do. I went with one of our young dancers from the Israeli group, and Bill Schwarz was there too. This was not the most exciting camp I ever went to in terms of new dances, but saw lots of friends, did a lot of dancing, ate a lot - does this all sound familiar? Didn't I just do this at Hagigah in Wisconsin? Too many camps!

Our group hasn't been dancing over the holidays. I tried to get to Orlando's and other advertised activities (such as contra), but missed them all due to conflicts. So now pumping up for OUR camp. Send in your registrations -- I need to know how many T-shirts to order, that takes some turn around time. And February is nearly here! Got some new buttons too, bringing the accordian, got my dancing shoes - do I need anything more? See you all soon. -- Terry

EVENTS IN GAINESVILLE

From Raluca Ioana Rosca <rarosca@ufl.edu>

WHEN: Wed Jan 28 2004, 7-10 pm

WHAT: African Dance workshop w. Noni Ojouba

WHERE: the gym of Florida Gym

Contact: Raluca rarosca@ufl.edu/ 352 281 6412 for directions

WHEN: January 30, 2004, 8-12 pm

WHAT: Greek Social (free hors d'oeuvres and beverages, live greek music 9-11; no admission charge, but bring a covered dish or dessert to share)

WHERE: GNV Garden Club (from Newberry Road//I75 Newberry entry for Gainesville, turn North at Red Lobster --across from Oaks Mall-- go to NW 14th Ave and turn left; the Garden Club is at the top of the hill).

FLORIDA FOLK DANCER

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Subscriptions are \$15 per year and include membership in the Florida Folk Dance Council. The membership year runs from one Annual Camp (usually February) to the next. Members can receive the newsletter electronically if desired.

Check our web site for further information on folk dancing in Florida: www.folkdance.org

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