



December 2007

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## President's Letter

Camp is progressing well. We're working out menus for the dinner and for lunches. Our caterer seems very excited about our Saturday dinner – they don't often get to prepare interesting ethnic meals.

In January, I'm going to be asking for volunteers to help with various tasks, not the least of which will be preparing and serving lunches. We'll have some work scholarships, but I'm also going to follow the pattern of some other camps I've attended and ask more members to contribute a little time each on the theory that many hands make light work. So please be thinking about what tasks you would enjoy doing.

A thought that's on my mind is that I recently lost someone's email message. I was traveling and tired when I read the email on my little portable device. Apparently I pushed the wrong button and deleted the message from both the portable and the mail server. And for the life of me, I can't remember who the message was from - the name has just slipped my mind. Anyway, the question was about roommates, and I hope my answer here will explain why I didn't immediately reply.

On the registration form, we're really encouraging people to choose their own roommates. It's just going to be a lot better if people will work out in advance who they want for a roommate. That said, if someone doesn't have anyone to put down for a roommate, just say "please randomly assign me to someone" and we'll do our best. My concern is that we're not likely to know people's preferences, but we'll do the best we can. Please don't let the roommate problem discourage anyone from registering.

Here's a progress report for those who remember my comment at the Annual Meeting about graduate school and wonder how that's going. I've submitted an application to the Master's program in Historic Preservation at the Savannah College of Art and Design. This is an e-learning program, so if I'm accepted, I'll be able to do much of it without going to Savannah. But there will be occasional periods in residence. And I've already made a couple of trips away to gather information on historic houses and preservation programs in other areas. It's been fun looking at interesting houses, researching their history, trying to figure out how they were originally built and how people lived in them. The pattern of life has changed dramatically since these houses were built. In just one glaring example, many house designers once believed that it was bad practice to put "water closets" inside the house. Only weak-willed city dwellers did that.

I've been interested in old houses and industrial buildings since I was a child growing up in central Virginia in the 1950's. There were many old homes, some quite grand, which had been vacant since the War (in Virginia in that day there was only one "War" of any importance). And I remember my uncle helping to open the flood gates at an old grain mill with a water turbine. So for the last 10 or 15 years I've been talking about going to graduate school to get a Ph.D. in Historic Archaeology when Harris had the next big layoff. But, somehow, I never got laid off. So if I'm ever going to do this, the time is approaching. Wish me luck. The hardest part is going to be getting used to doing research papers - it's very different from writing software.

- John

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## Moti Alfassy Israeli Dance Workshop

by Terry Abrahams

Orlando sponsored Moti Alfassy on a Sunday evening (November 11th) and it was one of the most inspiring evenings. A few years ago, Moti, a choreographer from way back, (who has a number of classic dances), had a car accident and ended up in a wheelchair. Well, now he can be on crutches, and taught from the crutch position, using his crutches not only to hold himself up, but also to keep rhythm, and help himself turn. He had a swivel stool which he used when dancing couple dances, moving himself along and turning with his partners (his wife, Rachel, and Debbie Meitin). When he was finished – and he managed five hours of dancing (exhausting for anyone) – he went back to his electric wheelchair.



Debbie Meitin and Moti Alfassy lead a couple dance

Here's the beginning of the story: While Ruthy Slann and Dany Ben Shalom were in Israel running their teacher's training session, they invited Moti's son to teach, but thought to invite Moti along just to watch, as they hadn't seen him in a long time, and knew he was in a wheelchair. At the appointed time, only Moti showed up, as his son had had a flat tire. Moti suggested he try to teach for his son, and he did! He told Ruthy that Rachel had never been to the States and he was hoping they could come; Ruthy suggested a dance tour while he was here and the rest is history. He's been all over the U.S. – and everyone has been inspired by his continuation to dance, as well as remembering many of his wonderful old dances. Charlie from Jacksonville was overheard to say "I'm never sitting out another dance."

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Moti Alfassy teaching an Israeli dance. His wife, Rachel, is at the far left.

Photos by Terry Abrahams

## Condolences

We offer our condolences to Debbie Meitin, whose husband, Samuel, passed away on Friday, December 7. Funeral services were held Sunday, December 9 at the Temple Israel Cemetery in Winter Garden. From Terry Abrahams, "He was a wonderful man."

## Tips on Teaching Dances to Beginners

*[Editor's Note: This piece is adapted from a note posted to the Rikud / Israeli Dance News chat group on Yahoo Groups, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rikud/>, by Loui Tucker and contributed by Terry Abrahams. It has been condensed and generalized to apply to any folk dance.]*

When picking and teaching dances for beginners and/or children:

1. Stick to dances with two parts. Add three-part dances when beginners can learn a two-part dance easily.
2. Not all easy dances are slow and not all slow dances are easy. Faster dances are generally more "fun" and that's what beginners/children are looking for.
3. Avoid dances that require a dancer to face away from center. Beginners need someone to watch and copy. Assuming the teacher is in the center of the circle modeling the dance movements, facing out defeats this purpose.
4. Don't tell a beginner "Now that you've learned this step to the **right**, all you have to do is reverse it to the **left**." Reversing a step sequence is not easy for beginners. Teach the steps in both directions.
5. Don't teach children/beginners dances designed just for them, that they will never see anywhere except in their children's or beginners' class.
6. Avoid announcing a dance by saying, "This is an easy dance." If they have problems learning the dance, they will feel defeated. Tell them it's slow or fast or happy or that you really like the music -- just don't say it's **easy**.

## Tampa's Trippin'!

by Terry Abrahams

How exciting to read about everyone's trips and performances. Florida rocks! And Caroline's newsletter makes it all come to life – kudos Caroline! Judith and Ernesto just came back from a quick trip to Italy, where they visited the town that was Judith's ancestral family home. Boy, I wish one of my kids worked at an airline! Looking forward to details upon their return. The rest of us pale by comparison, but that isn't to say we haven't been all over the Florida map!

This month, besides a bunch of us hitting the Greek festival, there were **two** Israeli dance workshops! First, the Moti Alfassy workshop in Orlando (see Moti Alfassy Israeli Dance Workshop). Then on Nov. 25, Don Schillinger, a Philadelphia teacher, was in for a session in St. Pete and we learned a couple of the newest dances, one of which Bobby, Pat, Andi and I loved! It's great to come back with one really good dance, and having a pleasant social evening, with dinner beforehand, as well, added to the enjoyment. I finally got to host Pat and Bobby as they spent the night before going home Monday morning. I have a permanent bedroom at their house, so was glad to finally reciprocate. There were a lot more people at this workshop than in the photo, below. This was taken at the very, very end, and more than half had already left. But there we are – the diehards! Of course, we're doing our usual contra, swing, country, English Country too.



Andi's husband's recovery is coming along nicely, thank heavens. Ursula's still working on herself, doing some line and salsa dancing, which is easier on her body than all the turns we do in Israeli and the hard floor we have for International. She is also trying to prepare for a trip to India. She really gets

around!!! She does two major trips a year. Maybe she'll write something up someday – how about it Ursula? Then you don't always have to hear it from me.

I know I always say something about myself, but I must brag a minute – I went to Gainesville to watch a friend fence in a tournament, and, at the last minute, entered the Women's Foil, (I haven't fenced since last July) and I took third! And lived to tell the story!



In the same mode, I helped out again at the Pirate Fest held in St. Pete this year. We put heavy jackets on the people (both kids and adults), hook a balloon on a mask, give them each a "weapon" and they have to break the balloon on the other guys mask. The real little kids we give rubber swords, so they don't have to break balloons – they just fight! And they love it. We charge \$5.00 apiece for this. And they pay it! The picture, above, is of me in my "male" pirate costume. Sometimes I go as a female, with skirt and blouse off my shoulder, looking a little folksy actually, but it was cold that day.

We all survived Thanksgiving, and now looking forward to the holidays. May you have Happy Dancing through any holiday you happen to be celebrating!

## The Grapevine Dancers of Sarasota

by Marie Millett

October was a good month for me. I returned to my roots in Kansas and danced with the Grapevine Dancers in Manhattan (Kansas, that is). Their teacher-coordinator was a part of our group in Wichita back in the 70's. Then I danced with the Grapevine Dancers of Wichita, which John and I helped organize in 1975. If all goes well, two Manhattan dancers will join us for the February Florida Folk Dance Camp.

Our numbers are increasing as dancers return to Florida for the winter. Our only concern is our increase in rent for our recreation center where we dance. Andi continues to be a wonderful teacher.

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## Mairi's Wedding

by Caroline Lanker

*There are 30 names of dances or dance types (including Mairi's Wedding) hidden in the following letter. How many can you find? The list of dances will be in next month's newsletter, along with the names of anyone who sends the complete list before then.*

Dear Sis,

To my great dismay, I'm so sorry you could not make it to Mairi's wedding. It was quite an affair. Family, friends and assorted notables came from far and wide. Walt zoomed down the road to the isles on his way and a czar dashed along the road to Bavaria with a van. A G.I., late to the wedding, almost crashed when a fox trotted across the road. Of course, Stan goes along at a rapid pace, always. The parking lot filled up and the overflow was sent to a nearby park and ride lot.

The wedding was quite elaborate. That smug Rose sang a harmonic aria and then they had Mac Harper hum Bach's toccata and fugue. I heard that Mairi's veil was of lace that had been handed down in her family since 1314. Of course, there wasn't a dry eye when Mairi said to the groom, James Mac Orr, "I do."

The reception went off very well, although an hour earlier they were in a panic – a cake was delivered to the reception hall, but it was the wrong one. But the food was wonderful, catered by Sal's Deli, long a favorite of the bride and groom. Strangely though, Andropov R. ate nothing. Wandering around the grounds was some kind of animal that spat, a Patagonian llama, I trust. Emu-like birds were milling about, until Erik O'Shay chased them off.

Unfortunately, not all of the guests were dressed for the occasion. As I told Ivan, I can't believe that Dodi Lipmann dared to wear a cameo with a dress slit to her waist. Sal saw the groom's uncle wearing a sham bowler. The funniest things were the brothers Aleppo's ties jiggling on their fat bellies, and the absolute worst were Levi Jackson's ragged pants.

All in all, you missed a good show.

Love,  
Liz



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Photos by  
Michael Wilson



## From the Editor

Gary and I continue to be intinerant dancers. We danced with the Orlando group on Wednesday, December 5. The evening had a Hanukkah theme, with most participants wearing Israeli colors - blue and white - and all of us doing a bunch of Israeli dances.



**Orlando Folk Dancers in blue and white for Hanukkah: Ann Robinson, Phyllis Dammer, Manuel Mora-Valls, Lucy Birkemeier, Eva Meyer, Gary Lanker, Joy Herndon, Joe Birkemeier, Juanita Schockey, Mary Jean Linn, Pat Henderson, Bobby Quibodeaux, and Emilie Brozek**

We recently had an opportunity to introduce folk dancing to some non-dancers. The weekend after Thanksgiving we went to a family camp that featured a Saturday night talent show. We taught a beginner class Saturday afternoon with a small number of participants. They liked one dance so much they asked us to teach it at the show. The pictures below show Gary and I leading the line in Savila se Bela Losa. That dance has the main qualifications of a good beginner dance, as discussed in [Tips on Teaching Dances to Beginners](#) on page 2 - easy steps, fast, fun, and with only two parts. The other photo shows Gary and I performing Alunelul ca la Sadova. The photographer was so pleased that he caught both of us with our feet off the ground! -CL

## Daytona Beach Greek Festival

(November 8-11)

by Kelly Fagan

Opa!

As you may or may not know, I'm a real groupie and aficionado of Greek Festivals. Overt Grecophile!

The gooderest news: Daytona has gotten their act together. The bulk of the Orlando "Village" had given up this year and skipped out due to the paucity of dancing at this festival over the last few years. Lo and behold! It was terrific. Danced to my heart's content (and anatomical fatigue). The arrangement of band to dance floor was much more user friendly and accessible. Once per hour, the church dance group performed for about ten minutes. The band played every hour and, during breaks, good Greek dance recordings invited us to dance. The sound system was set at an appropriate level; pleasant, not deafening.

It is my personal preference to attend festivals on the flanking days to Saturday, if possible. Less crowded. More room to dance. More of the "natives" (church members) up dancing. Sunday, late afternoon, is particularly fun....although they do sometimes run out of your culinary favorites towards the end of the day. Hope to see you in Daytona next year! I won't miss it!

### Do You Know Nelda Drury?

*Note from Edwina Scinta:*

The San Antonio Folk Dance Festival in March '08 (see [notice in Events](#)) is Nelda Guerrero-Drury's 50th dance festival. I wonder if any of your readers have any anecdotes or stories about her that they would care to share with us. I am hoping to get a reporter with the San Antonio Express- News to do several articles about Nelda, ethnic dancing, etc. Any articles would be appreciated. They can be sent to me at [edwinas50@hotmail.com](mailto:edwinas50@hotmail.com) or by mail to 10 Melrose Pl. Apt.705-E, San Antonio, TX 78212.

### Quotes re Moti Alfassy

"I personally admire him, his ability to see life in a 'positive' light. His famous sentence is 'I am not disabled, just limited.' That explained everything . . ."

- Israel Yakovee, Israeli dance instructor

"You are SO right. Moti's time here in Orlando was also very special to all who attended his workshop!"

- Debbie Meitin

## National Folk Organization in Orlando

by Pat Henderson

Remember to put the weekend of February 28 - March 2 on your calendar for the annual conference of the National Folk Organization. Lee Otterholt is the guest teacher and the conference features a dance party with him on Friday night, February 29, and then a workshop with him during the day on Saturday, March 1. There will be a southern style barbecue and a dance party Saturday evening.

You can register for the whole conference, which starts on Thursday evening and includes all activities and two meals - lunch on Friday and the dinner Saturday evening. The cost is \$140 for non-members and \$100 for members. The cost of membership is \$30 for individual and \$40 for household so you can join NFO and come to the conference for the either the same or less money.

If you are coming just for Saturday, the cost is \$40 and must be received by February 14. The registration form can be found on line at [www.nfo-usa.org/NFOConference08RegForm.htm](http://www.nfo-usa.org/NFOConference08RegForm.htm) and will be sent to regular mail readers with this newsletter.

An added bonus is that Lee will be dancing with the Orlando group on Wednesday, February 27. If you wish to have accommodations while in Orlando, let me know. The Orlando club members are opening their homes to host you. If anyone wants to camp or RV on our property, that is an option also. You may contact me at 407-275-6247 or [henderp@bellsouth.net](mailto:henderp@bellsouth.net).

"We choose how actively we take part in the cosmic dance of life. We can become wallflowers, mere spectators to life, if we get trapped in the patterns and habits of the past. Or we can choose to dance by being present and open to the energies, the opportunities and the guidance available to us each moment." – Author unknown, submitted by Dan Lampert.

### Events

## December

### Wednesday, December 19 OIFDC Holiday Party

Place: Place: home of Pat Henderson and Bobby Quibodeaux, 9859 Berry Dease Rd. Orlando

Time: 6:30 PM pot luck supper, 7:30 PM dancing

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## **December 21-24 Machol Miami 2007**

Guest choreographers: Dudu Barzilai and Rafi Ziv

Place: Sheraton Ft. Lauderdale Airport Hotel

Before and After Parties on Dec. 20 and Dec. 24, at the MAR JCC, North Miami Beach

Price: \$379, includes meals, not hotel room.

More information and on-line registration at [www.macholmiami.com](http://www.macholmiami.com).

Contact: Machol Miami, 594 NE 199 Terrace, Miami, Florida 33179, 305-690-4343, [dancemiami@hotmail.com](mailto:dancemiami@hotmail.com)

## **January**

### **January 2 and 3 Duquesne University Tamburitzans**

Place: Tarpon Springs Performing Arts Center,  
Tarpon Springs, FL  
Time: 7:30 PM

Contact: Box Office, 727-937-0686

### **January 3 – 6 Winter Dance Conference “Macedonian Weekend”**

Instructors: Yiannis Papadopoulos, Kyriakos  
Moissidis, Joe Graziosi

Place: Spanos / Pappas Community Center, 348 N.  
Pinellas Ave. Tarpon Springs, FL 34689, 727-938-  
0261

Price: \$159; registration deadline: December 21

See the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral's  
Levendia Dance Troupe website ([www.levendia.org](http://www.levendia.org))  
for more information and registration.

Contact: Millennium Travel, (727) 944-2000 or toll  
free (877) 523-0959, [Litsa@carlsontravelgroup.com](mailto:Litsa@carlsontravelgroup.com)

### **January 4 and 5 Duquesne U. Tamburitzans**

Place: Watson B. Duncan III Theatre, Lake Worth, FL  
Time: 7:30 PM

Contact: Tamburitzans, 1-877-826-6437

### **Sunday, January 6 English Country Dance and Brunch**

Music by Full Circle

Place: Community House, 6200 Hall Road,  
Melbourne Village, FL 32904

Web site: <http://chagalo.org/ecd>

Contact: Catie Condran Geist, 321-427-3587,  
[catiegeist@att.net](mailto:catiegeist@att.net)

## **Tuesday, January 29 English Country Dance**

Guest teacher Barrie Bullimore from London,  
England

Place and contact same as for January 6 English  
Country Dance

## **February**

### **February 15-18 Florida Folk Dance Camp**

Place: Kenilworth Lodge, 836 SE Lakeview Drive,  
Sebring, FL 33870

Teachers: Cristian Florescu & Sonia Dion  
(Romanian) and Susan Lind-Sinanian (Armenian)

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

### **Wednesday, February 27**

Orlando International Folk Dance Club will host Lee  
Otterholt at its regular meeting.

Place: home of Pat Henderson and Bobby  
Quibodeaux, 9859 Berry Dease Rd. Orlando

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

### **February 28 - March 2 National Folk Organization Conference in Orlando**

Featuring a dance workshop by Lee Otterholt

See [National Folk Organization in Orlando](#), p. 5.

## **March**

### **March 14 – 16 San Antonio Folk Dance Festival**

Marking Nelda Drury's 50th anniversary of founding  
and involvement with the San Antonio College Folk  
Dance Festival and the newer San Antonio Folk  
Dance Festival.

Place: Our Lady of The Lake University's  
International Folk Culture Center, 411 S.W. 24th St.,  
San Antonio, TX 78207.

Instructor: Miroslav Marcetic, Serbian. Also a  
Serbian musicians ensemble.

Includes: Saturday gala concert of performing  
groups, primarily from Texas

Directions and campus map at [www.ollusa.edu](http://www.ollusa.edu).

Contact: Nelda Drury, 210-342-2905,  
[nelda@sc2000.net](mailto:nelda@sc2000.net).

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**Saturday, March 15 Duquesne University  
Tamburitzans**

Place: Sunrise Civic Center Theater, Sunrise, FL  
Time: 7:30 PM

Contact: Box Office, 954-747-4646  
Information: [www.tamburitzans.duq.edu/](http://www.tamburitzans.duq.edu/)

**Sunday, March 16 Duquesne University  
Tamburitzans**

Place: Mainland High School Performing Arts Center  
Daytona Beach, FL  
Time: 4:00 PM

Contact: Stacy Codd, 386-760-9623

**Tuesday, March 18 Duquesne University  
Tamburitzans**

Place: Palm Beach Comm. College Eissey Campus  
Theatre, Palm Beach Gardens, FL  
Time: 7:30 PM

Contact: Box Office, 561-207-5900

**March 27 - 30 The Miami Valley Folk Dancers  
Workshop - Oldies but Goodies**

Teachers: Ron Houston from Austin, Texas, Founder  
of the Society of Folk Dance Historians, and Alix  
Cordray from Oslo, Norway.

Place: Michael Solomon Pavilion (Community Golf  
Course), 2917 Berkley St. Dayton, Ohio 45409

More information: [www.daytonfolkdance.com/mvfd](http://www.daytonfolkdance.com/mvfd).  
Contact: Leslie Hyll, 937-252-0638,  
[mvfd@daytonfolkdance.com](mailto:mvfd@daytonfolkdance.com)

## June

**June 14 – 21 Scandia Camp Mendocino**

Teachers from Hallingdal, Norway and Värmland,  
Sweden, with musicians playing hardingfele, fiddle  
and nyckelharpa.

Place: Mendocino Woodlands, near Mendocino, CA  
Price: \$690 per person; registration deadline is May  
1, 2008.

Information at [www.ScandiaCampMendocino.org](http://www.ScandiaCampMendocino.org).  
Contact: [Registration@ScandiaCamp.org](mailto:Registration@ScandiaCamp.org)

*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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## 2008 International Folk Dance Tours

The following list includes tours through early July  
2008. Note the change of dates on one.

**March 21-30 Jim Gold Budapest: Easter/Spring  
Festival Tour**

Led by Adam Molnar

**May 3-17 Jim Gold Poland Tour**

Led by Richard Schmidt

**June 8-19 Jim Gold Serbia: Boljevac Folk  
Festival Tour**

Led by Jim Gold and Cheryl Spasojevic

**June 8-19 Jim Gold Serbia: Boljevac Folk  
Festival Tour**

Led by Jim Gold and Cheryl Spasojevic

**June 14-24 Jim Gold Norway Tour (new dates)**

Led by Lee Otterholt

For complete information on Jim Gold Tours, see  
[www.jimgold.com](http://www.jimgold.com). Or contact Jim Gold International  
at (201) 836-0362, [jimgold@jimgold.com](mailto:jimgold@jimgold.com)

**June 17 – 29 Romanian Dance Tour**

Led by Theodor and Lia Vasilescu and Marin Barbu,  
President of the Romanian National  
Choreographer's Association. Tour includes lessons  
with Romanian dance teachers, dancing in a  
Romanian village, seeing folk dance performances,  
other sightseeing and wine tasting.

Contact: Ping Chun  
49 Junard Drive, Morristown, NJ 07960  
973-539-70920, [ping.chun@att.net](mailto:ping.chun@att.net).

If you are interested in this tour, please contact Pat  
Henderson, [henderp@bellsouth.net](mailto:henderp@bellsouth.net), 407-275-6247.

**June 28 - July 9 Mel Mann's Dance on the Water  
to Russia**

For more more information on Mel Mann tours, see:  
[www.FolkDanceOnTheWater.org](http://www.FolkDanceOnTheWater.org), or contact: Mel  
Mann, c/o Berkeley Travel Co. , 1301 California St.,  
Berkeley, CA 94703-1061, 510-526-4033

**Cultural note:** The hardingfele, or Hardanger fiddle,  
an instrument like a violin but with eight or nine  
strings, is used to in southwestern Norway. The  
nyckelharpa, used in Sweden, is also a stringed,  
bowed instrument, but less like a violin. It has a  
broad neck, is held in front of the player and has  
keys on the neck to depress the strings. Those of  
us who attended the Scandinavian workshop hosted  
by John Daly in Melbourne in February 2005 saw  
and heard a nyckelharpa first hand.

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FIRST CLASS

#### FLORIDA FOLK DANCER

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