

Florida Folk Dancer

A Newsletter of the Florida Folk Dance Council, Inc.

September-October 2010

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Prez Sez

Sometimes I wonder how I ever had time to work! I'm not sure what I'm doing all the time, but I'm doing something, as time flies every day – and I guess that's a good thing! I'm back from Costa Rica (great trip, and I've finally finished my summary and pictures), I'm back from Karmiel USA and I dropped my camera and can't get my pictures to transfer into my computer. A few people are back from Bulgaria and beyond (see [Bulgaria with Jim Gold](#)). I know people are back from Mountain Playshop in N.C. where Jim Gold taught. And October's is looking good! In addition to an Oktoberfest, I'm going to a wedding in CA, a fencing tournament in Cincinnati (where I will receive an award as outstanding veteran – yea!), the contra Fall Ball weekend and then – our Fall Fling!

Of course I'm looking forward to seeing you there, and we are going to once again give you a chance to get either a free T-shirt or free DVD if you register for camp at that weekend. So, have your checkbooks ready. John will be there to receive your registrations. Plans for camp are going well! Our Greek instructor, Kyriakos Moisidis, is going on a circuit while he's in the states. A guy named Bart Carpenter is behind the scenes, making travel plans for him. Bart has helped FFDC with a number of our newer teachers. He has his finger tight on the folk dance scene, knows who's where and makes many arrangements for them. We owe him. Some day I hope to meet him! So – see you soon! PS – have a few dollars available for my many new buttons! (Yes, there are even more – who knew there could be any more than I already have?)

Lake Geneva Folk Dance Weekend

by Delores Lustig

September 24 – 26, I attended a folk dance weekend in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, sponsored by the Lake Geneva Folk Dancers. The weekend event has been held once or twice a year for 40 years, so this year was their 40th anniversary celebration.

I started dancing with the South Suburban (Chicago) Folk Dancers in 1987 and our group always attended the Lake Geneva dance weekends. Although I have been dancing with the Sarasota Grapeviners since I became a full time Florida resident, I try to get back for the Lake Geneva weekends, which bring together dancers from Wisconsin and Chicago folk dance groups. The teachers are the leaders of the various groups.



Delores Lustig, on the left, with Sarasota winter dancers Kathy Fico, Phyllis Spiegel, Don Winnick and Ron Fico at the Lake Geneva Folk Dance Camp 40th Anniversary celebration.

Bulgaria with Jim Gold

by Jack Seltzer, Pat Henderson and Sandra Suplicki

Five FFDC members enjoyed Jim Gold's trip to Bulgaria, August 3-15. Linda and Jack Seltzer, Sandra Suplicki, Bobby Quibodeaux, and Pat Henderson went mainly for the Koprivshtitsa Festival, held every five years. There were 51 travelers, along with a singing coach from California, a gaida player, and a young dance teacher. We had a tour guide the entire time in Bulgaria but the gaida player and dance teacher joined us after the festival. Between the festival, the gaida player and dance teacher, Bobby playing international music a few evenings (thank you, Bobby) and dancing at our dinner site, we danced every day. We had eleven hectic and 'far out' days traveling all over the Bulgarian mountains.

We started in Sofia. The second night we sat around on couches and comfy chairs in the Radisson Hotel's second floor lounge while Jim led an introductory meeting, where we learned a lot about our dancing companions from across the United States, Canada and Saudi Arabia. We proceeded into our first formal dinner, complete with wine and many excellent native dishes.

Our trip only got better as we proceeded to its highlight, the Koprivshtitsa Festival, or, as we affectionately called it "the folk dancers' Woodstock". The Koprivshtitsa Festival was introduced by the Communist regime in 1965 to preserve Bulgarian folklore. This festival is a priceless event that features authentic folk music and dance from across Bulgaria, with most performers wearing their ethnic costumes. It takes place in and around Koprivshtitsa, a historic village of Ottoman traders' houses in a wooded vale of the Sredna Gora Mountains. The multi-stage festival site lies outside the village about a 20 to 30 minute hike up the mountain – you must have good walking shoes. Shuttle buses are provided for those unable to walk up the mountain but the wait might be long at peak times.



As we were dining peacefully, an amazing sound and sight emerged right before our eyes. It was Ansamble Tchinari, with our gaida player Ventsi's friend, and a performance group in full costume. There were four men jumping and kicking together, four women whirling as they twirled tassels. After an hour of this incredible uplifting experience, everyone was up dancing around the tables and chairs. We were led by the choreographer and joined by the dancers. This was only the first of many times during this adventure of a lifetime through the mountains and valleys of Bulgaria when we were regaled by and joined the festivities provided by outstanding singers and dancers. What an incredible start to this unbelievable tour!

Top right: a dance group waiting to perform at the Koprivshtitsa festival; left: Ansamble Tchinari performing at dinner in Sofia; center: dance group performing; right: a young singer and her accompanist

Photos by Pat Henderson and Jack Seltzer

Booths for handicrafts, musical instruments, CDs, food and drink were plentiful. This year the Festival had seven stages with entertainment 9 AM to 7 PM on Friday and Saturday. In the evenings, groups from other countries performed on the stage in the town square, which made for non-stop singing and dancing.

Stockton Folk Dance Camp 2010

by Caroline Lanker

This year's Stockton Folk Dance Camp surpassed even the great time Gary and I had at Stockton in 2009. This year, we attended both weeks. Of course, the major event of the camp was the wedding of Sonia Dion and Cristian Florescu. In case any Florida dancer doesn't already know, Cristian and Sonia taught at Florida camp in 2008 and brought us such favorite dances as Dana and Opinca.

The wedding was held on the Saturday afternoon of the first week of camp. Everyone at camp that week was invited to the wedding, as well as second-week campers who came in early for the occasion. With the addition of members of the wedding party and other friends of Cristian and Sonia, and there were at least 280 people at the wedding and reception.



Musicians playing before the wedding dinner. The man in the middle, in sunglasses, is a wonderful accordionist whom the Moreaus brought down from Canada especially to play for the wedding reception.

The ceremony took place at a Greek Orthodox church near the University of the Pacific, where camp is held. A Romanian Orthodox priest and deacon officiated. Cameras were not allowed at the wedding and it was difficult to get good pictures at the reception because of the crowds around the bride and groom. To see some good pictures of the event, go to the Stockton Folk Dance Camp website, www.folkdancecamp.org, and click on "2010 Pictures", then scroll down to the wedding pictures. I'm including a few candid shots of the reception here and may have more later.

Yves Moreau and France Bourque-Moreau, who taught at Stockton in 2009, came just for the wedding. They were the godparents of the bride and groom, which are important positions in a Romanian wedding. They take part in the ceremony and the godfather is a sort of master of ceremonies for the reception.



Left: Sonia and Cristian starting the evening's dance with the first waltz. Right: Yves Moreau and France Bourque-Moreau, after the wedding, carrying the candles they held during the ceremony. The candles could not be put down until they were placed at the bride and groom's table at the wedding dinner.

Each of the tables at the wedding dinner was given a name that meant something special to Cristian and Sonia. Gary and I sat at the "Mr. and Ms. Banana" table. The name comes from one of the running jokes at Stockton camp; whenever Cristian, teaching a dance, wants to tell people to move in an arc, he says to make a figure like a banana. Two of our table mates were Murray and Randi Spiegel, who are known to our members who went on the Romanian trip in 2008. (See "Roamin' in Romania" in the July/August 2008 Florida Folk Dancer.) At Murray's instigation, some of the group at the table had brought bananas to the reception and Murray arranged them artfully in the center of the table. See pictures on the next page.

During the reception, several people presented various entertainments. Murray and Randi sang a round called "Shut Up", with advice for newlyweds. You can see their performance at the reception on the web at

www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZaSFifsswU.

Orlando International Folk Dance Club

by Pat Henderson

I was remiss in my duties by not reporting Juanita Schockey's 80th birthday party in the last issue of FFD. She had a fantastic dinner party at the Olympia Restaurant on June 2 with about 70 dancers, family, and friends attending. We brought our Greek and Balkan CD and danced most of the evening. Juanita's daughters, Linda and Diana, were there to help her celebrate. A belly dancer added to the festivities.



Juanita Schockey at her 80th birthday party, with daughters Linda and Diana.

Photo by Pat Henderson

In July, Juanita and Fred visited a third daughter in Alaska, where Fred fished. While there, they experienced a Florida winter with high temperatures in the 50s. Shortly after returning, Juanita visited Diana and other family in West Virginia.



Juanita and Fred Schockey in Alaska

In other news, Kelly Fagan missed the Bulgarian trip she was scheduled to go on because her eye took a long time to heal after retina surgery. However, her sister, Lynda, drove her to western North Carolina where her parents were visiting. She enjoyed the change of scenery and it was great rehab for her.

In August, Jan Lathi, Ann Robinson, Betty Nehemias and Juanita Schockey went to Mainwoods Camp week 2 with Yves and France Moreau and Ahmet Luleci. They had a good time in spite of a few physical problems among them. A day after returning from Mainwoods, Ann was back on a plane to North Carolina for the Penland Craft School. Larry Wartell attended a family reunion and Lucy and Joe Birkemeier went to Washington DC for a nurses' reunion for her and then to visit family in West Virginia.

Phyllis Dammer and her husband Ed traveled to Kansas City, MO to visit family, then they stayed a week in Iowa in a timeshare condo and then on to Lake of the Ozarks. All that time the temperatures were in the 100s, so Ed did not fish on the lake. They left early and spent a few days in Biloxi at the Grand Casino.

Bobby and I went on the Bulgarian trip, (see [Bulgaria with Jim Gold](#)), Karmiel USA workshop and the Mountain Playshop in North Carolina.

Before Karmiel USA, we picked up our daughter off the Appalachian Trail in Damascus, VA. She had hiked about 450 miles in 2.5 months and is now back with us in Orlando. Does anyone have any work for a 29 year old?

"Eye See You"

A big note of gratitude for all the well wishes, cards, emails, and prayers during my time out with the ripped retina. I'm at 75 percent and improving all the time. Driving, dancing, treating patients – carefully moving through the universe. I am grateful.

– Kelly Fagan

Attend the Tale of Sweeney Todd!

DeLand (and Orlando) folk dancer Kelly Elisabeth Fagan is playing the charming, creepy, and ever so twisted Mrs. Lovett in the upcoming production of the musical thriller/black comedy of "Sweeney Todd" at The Athens Theatre in DeLand. The players in this production are all top notch with an ensemble composed of experienced thespians normally in lead roles. The voices will blow your socks off. The show runs October 29 through November 14. Group discounts available. 386-736-1500. Contact Kelly for dining ideas from Thai to Cuban to Italian. "The Demon Barber of Fleet Street" awaits you!

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Mainwoods Dance Camp

by Jan Lathi

Anne Robinson, Juanita Shockey, Betty Nehemias, Kay Demos, and Jan Lathi traveled to Portland, Maine to attend the second week of Mainwoods Dance Camp, August 22 – 28. The camp location is nestled among grand pine trees along the Saco River. The main lodge welcomed us as we registered for camp. Then we were ushered to our cabin.

The instructors during the week included France Bourque-Moreau, Yves Moreau, Ahmet Luleci, George Fogg, and Sandy Starkman. The ethnic meals, decorations, and entertainment each evening included Hawaiian, French Canadian, Turkish, and a Swedish Smorgasbord. All campers participated in food prep, decorating and entertaining, so it was a "hands on" experience.

Yves taught two of the dances we had learned from him at Florida Folk Dance Camp 2009, but there were many new dances which we are eager to share with Florida dancers. We learned a particularly nice dance called Kardamska Zborenka and another called Arnaoutsko. France was delightful! We learned two French Canadian mixers, Valse Lucille, and Valse De L'amitie, as well as several square-type dances.

Ahmet taught some really neat Turkish dances. One of the favorites was Ordu, an easy dance involving arm swings. He had his wife and 12-year-old son with him. For the Turkish entertainment, they danced an intricate dance together. The son is unbelievable! George Fogg taught some interesting English dances, and Sandy Starkman taught an Asian dance called "Mountain Spring Song", as well as others.

We were privileged to have a live music ensemble called the "Mainwoods Music Makers" at camp and they were good! Lobster was brought in one afternoon for a picnic - mmm! All in all, it was great fun, with a great crowd of dancers from all over Canada and the U.S. Let's get a group together from Florida to go next summer!

**Dennis Boxell
with two of his
disciples, Jaap
Leegwater and
Yves Moreau, in
1990**

*Photo by Barbara
Erickson*



Altyn's Wedding

Pat Henderson reports that Altyn, the University of Central Florida student from Kazakhstan who danced in Orlando for two years, recently married in Kazakhstan. She met her husband, a fellow Kazakh student, at UCF and they returned to their country when they graduated.

Altyn was the Florida Folk Dance Camp Olga Princi scholar one year. In the March 2005 Florida Folk Dancer, Dan Lampert interviewed Altyn in his "Reflections on Dance" column. Along with the column are some pictures of Altyn performing a belly dance at Florida Folk Dance Camp 2005. You can read that newsletter in the archives section of the FFDC website, www.folkdance.org.



Pat received the photos, above, of Altyn's wedding in a note from Beck Hutchinson, below. Altyn lived with Beck and her family while she was at UCF. Beck and her daughter went to Kazakhstan for the wedding. The date on the pictures indicates they were taken July 30, 2010.

Dear Pat!

Here you go. Altyn had a traditional Kazakh wedding and a second, western style wedding. Her hat is white fox topped with owl feathers. I sewed the gold ribbons into her braids and her skirt is hooped. Of course there was dancing all night! Everyone dances there. They all love dance! Kazakh hospitality is generous and extravagant. At the wedding were belly dancers, traditional Kazakh dancers, an Elvis impersonator and a masked contortionist who put himself through a tennis racket! And of course, lots of vodka!

This is so sweet of you to honor her this way. I know she will be touched. I am grateful, too, for all that you have done for her!

Beck

Gainesville's Back in Business

by Jack Seltzer

Gainesville's rocking again! With Linda and I going into retirement mode in June and our unreal trip to Europe for 37 days, we all took a little break from our regular dancing Friday nights this summer.

On September 25 we kicked off the dance season with a little show and tell at our house, with a bunch of photos and videos of us travelling all over the mountains of Bulgaria – a continuous two and a half hours of viewing colorful costumes in the mountains around Koprivshtitsa, videos of lots of (mock) Bulgarian weddings, and Bulgarian voices from at least four or five different villages.

We were mesmerized for the whole night. One of the highlights was of a video of me on stage with three other men in the little Austrian town of Maria Alm, doing a bench and hat dance. They picked two spectators to dance with two of the regular dancers. I don't think I've ever laughed more when doing a dance. Just hilarious!

Now Gainesville is up and running every Friday night (call to confirm: 352-359-2903, info@gifd.org) from 8 PM until whenever.

Fall Fling Plans

by Caroline Lanker

It was just about fifty years ago that I started folk dancing, in the fall of 1960. With the cooperation of the Fall Fling hosts, the South Brevard International Folk Dancers, this year's Fall Fling will incorporate a 50th anniversary celebration. If you have also been dancing for 50 years or more, please let me and/or John Daly know about it before the Fling.

Part of the day will be devoted to playing everyone's "first favorite dances". However long you have been folk dancing, please think about the first few dances you really liked when you started and still like today. Send your short list to John so he can include them in the program for the day.

Fall Fling will be held on **Saturday, October 30** in the Melbourne Village hall, the same place it has been for the last few years. **Directions:** Take New Haven Ave (US 192) east from I-95 or west from U.S. 1 to Dayton Blvd. North on Dayton to Hall Road, which is marked with a sign "Historic Site Community House". East on Hall Road to the white building that looks like an old barracks. You can get a map online by requesting "Hall Road, Melbourne Village, FL" on Google maps.

Sarasota Grapeviners

by Judy Merkt

Through the summer's heat and thunderstorms, we managed to dance every single Wednesday, and our waistlines, attitudes, and metabolisms are happy for it.

Unhappily, we lost another of our long-time Sarasota folk dancers, Sydney Iwens. You may recall from the last newsletter, I reported that Sydney's wife, Edith, had passed away in early June. Sydney, who had gone to live with his daughter up in Pennsylvania, passed away in August – a heart-breaking summer for his family for sure. As for us, both Edith and Sydney were loved and admired in our Sarasota group and we will never forget them.

Andi Kapplin has returned to her rightful place as our instructor and that brings smiles to our faces – especially to the faces of Marie, Delores, and me, the summer substitute teachers. Andi is, of course, in great form and we will have a wonderful dance "season" I'm sure.

At our September 22nd session we had a visit from three students of the New College of Florida, located just a few miles north of our meeting place. They were doing a public interest story as a special project. They interviewed a number of our dancers, took pictures, danced with us (doing a pretty darned good job, too!), and appeared to have a good time. One of them, Paul Zombory, wrote a very nice article about us that was published in the Catalyst, the student newspaper of New College, on September 29. It would be great if they returned and brought a few more of their fellow students!

From the Editor

A lot has been going on since the last issue of the Florida Folk Dancer. I received so much material, it didn't fit in one issue. I couldn't even include my own tales of traveling and dancing in California and Oregon, except for the Stockton Folk Dance Camp article. I apologize to those people whose articles didn't make it this time. They will be in the next issue.

All the club news articles that were submitted are included. So, you can all send more news for the next issue.

The Events section of this issue is also a little slim. Please look at the calendar on the FFDC website (www.folkdance.org) for the full list of upcoming events and tours.

– CL

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FLORIDA FOLK DANCER

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FFDC Website: www.folkdance.org