



# **Folk Dance Scene**



**Published by the Folkdance Federation of California, South**

**Volume 61 No. 8**

**October 2025**

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## Folk Dance Scene

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*Folk Dance Scene* is published to educate its readers concerning the folk dance, music, costumes, lore and culture of the peoples of the world. It is designed to inform them of the opportunities to experience folk dance and culture in Southern California and elsewhere.

**SUBMISSIONS:** Information to be included in the *Scene* should reach the editor by the 10th of the month preceding publication. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for space considerations. Electronic submission (including all photos) is required. Views expressed in *Scene* are solely the opinions of the authors. Neither *Scene* nor the Federation assumes responsibility for the accuracy of the information sent in.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Subscription orders and renewals should be addressed to Jan Rayman. Annual subscription rates are: \$10 for pdf via email, or \$25 USA, \$30 Canada for a print version (other foreign subscriptions available by email only). Payment should be made to Folk Dance Federation of Calif., South. Change of address or circulation problems should be addressed to Jan Rayman; see table above.

**ADVERTISING:** Ads must be consistent with the purposes of the magazine, accompanied by full payment, and either camera ready on bright white paper or in 300 dpi electronic format (TIF, JPG, or PDF). Ads that are not camera ready will be returned. Payment should be made to Folk Dance Federation of Calif., South.

Size (width x length)	Federation Club	Others	Payment to:
1/4 page (3" x 3 1/2")	\$10	\$15	Folk Dance Federation of Calif., South
1/2 page (6" x 3 3/4" or 3" x 7 1/2")	\$15	\$25	121 101st Ave NE
Full page (6" x 7 1/2")	\$25	\$40	Lake Stevens, WA 98258

*On the cover: Spontaneous vari hassapikos stopping traffic in Naoussa, Northwest Greek Macedonia 2008 holiday weekend. Photo courtesy of Betchen Barber.*



# Folk Dance Scene

Volume 61, No. 8  
October 2025

## Editors' Corner

We are favored again by Betchen with the cover photo, and her Costume Corner featuring a second part of source books for reference on Greek costumes.

Conejo Valley Folk Dancers report on a first favorite dances night in On the Scene.

The Calendar is replete with many options for your dancing pleasure.

Last Dance includes a bio of Preston Ashbourn, we have another bio following.

Poetry Corner features a new poem, and another to balance the page.

Find data you may need in Club Directory

Be of good cheer!

*Pat Cross and Don Krotser*

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*For information about dancing in the area, contact the Federation at the Federation website: [SoCalFolkdance.org](http://SoCalFolkdance.org)*

# The Corner

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

It's always amazing to me how many activities are going on in our community! As summer (finally?) comes to an end, everyone is coming back or leaving for tours, workshops, and festivals. In the last week alone, I've spoken with people just back from Maurits and Tineke's tour in Armenia, Ira's in Bulgaria and Georgia, Mainewoods Camp and Mendocino Camp – lots of dances to learn! Many more are soon off to Turkey and Fall Camp. All this while trying to have an outside life with work, kids, or parents.

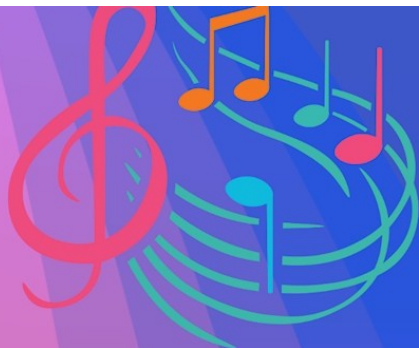
Speaking of Fall Camp, I'd like to recommend people sign up soon, as spaces are limited. We will be having Catherine Rudin as the primary teacher, and she's fabulous. With a whole lifetime of Balkan experience and expertise, it will be great for the West Coast to get to know her and enjoy her knowledge and passion. You can catch some of her zoom sessions on Sunday afternoons to make an initial acquaintance. I hear Terry also has some other surprises and opportunities planned for Camp this year – should be a terrific weekend!

A few of us were able to attend a Nevenka Ensemble collaboration with Jax Neal, a contemporary choreographer/dancer at Dance LA on September 6<sup>th</sup>. Really interesting and thought-provoking to see how the melodies and rhythms we love so much can be reimaged and interpreted. We often talk about the evolution of dances through time and circumstances, and this event pushed the boundaries of our "folkdance box"!

Conejo Valley Folk Dancers are also hosting an Armenian Workshop on November 16<sup>th</sup> with Naomi Eshoo, so please try and attend that event. There will also be a presentation on Recreational International Folk dancing at the Lakeview Senior Center in Irvine on November 5<sup>th</sup>, sponsored by the Irvine Multicultural Association. Usually their programs focus on one country each month, but they are excited to hear about how many cultures we touch on every week. Interfolk will provide some live music, and we will do a small set of dances and some audience participation. Come join us to help expand our connections into the community.

We look forward to seeing all of you at upcoming events, and please share your stories and surprises with us!

*Greg*



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LA DanceFit  
10936 Santa Monica Blvd

[lifebalkandancers.com](http://lifebalkandancers.com)  
[Worldance1@gmail.com](mailto:Worldance1@gmail.com)





# ON THE SCENE

## CONEJO VALLEY FOLK DANCERS

On August 13, Conejo Valley Folk Dancers held what they hope to be their first annual favorite dances night. About 20 dancers gathered early to share dinner at Urban Plates and then danced about 30 dances, including a lovely Viennese Waltz. Everyone got to do at least one of their favorites and some folks may or may not have voted for more than one, accounting for 30 dances and 20 dancers.



## *Let's Dance!*

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## **TURKEY May 6<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> and ARMENIA May 23-June 8 (tentative dates) in 2026** with **TINEKE & MAURITS van Geel** and **AHMET DEMIRBAGH**



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Adventure, culture, and dance await—you won't want to miss it!

# COSTUME CORNER

## RESEARCHING GREEK COSTUMES, PART II

So many good books on Greek folk costumes exist that I have broken my review of them into two parts. Last time I discussed Angelikí Hatzimicháli's multi-volume work, *The Greek Folk Costume*. Now I will start with A. Raftis and Ch. Broufas's lovely softback booklets, *40 Greek Costumes from the Dora Stratou Theatre Collection* (Athens, no date). "Booklets" is plural because I have two versions, in different sizes, bought at the theater on different trips to Athens, but with the same ISBN number (960-7204-09-3) (**Photos 1, 2**). They feature costumes from the same 40 places, although in a slightly different order, while some of the photos, texts, and even costumes differ a bit (e.g., for Naoussa). (The larger booklet has the text in Greek as well as in English, done for the theater's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.) Dóra Strátou herself (1903-1988), actress, dancer and choreographer, published much Greek folk music, wrote books about Greek traditional dance, and founded the *Greek Dances Theatre "Dora Stratou"* near the Athenian Acropolis. There, from May to September, the dancers still perform wearing some of the 2500 regional costumes in the theater's collection. Clearly these booklets barely scratch the surface of that archive—but unfortunately the theater has no place for permanent display, so they have shared some of their riches here. All the costumes shown are women's:

'In those days, when the woman went to the market her costume "spoke", revealing which village she was from, if she was married, if she had children, if her husband was a farmer or a shepherd, if she was in mourning, and much more. Whoever saw her could "read" her costume and address her accordingly. Each costume was like a uniform with various insignia, in the same way that a military one is.' —A. Raftis (p.12, or p.8)



**Photo 1:** Front covers of 2 versions of *40 Greek Costumes from the Dora Stratou Theatre Collection*, featuring photos of costumes from Episkopí in Emathía (L) and two from Pélion in Thessaly (Rt).



**Photo 2:** Back covers of the 2 versions of *40 Greek Costumes from the Dora Stratou Theatre Collection*, showing the back of the costume from Episkopí, Emathía (L) and the very famous golden one from Mesógeia, Attica (Rt).



## GREEK COSTUMES



**Photo 3:** Front and back covers of Papantoníou's 1981 *Greek Costumes*, showing a woman's costume from Eastern Thrace on the front, and typical Cretan male attire—still occasionally seen in the 1980s—on the back.

Another rich resource lies in the works of Ioánnna Papantoníou, who chose to use her hard-fought-for inheritance to found, research, and stock a museum of Greek folk art in Náplion. In 1981, her Peloponnesian Folklore Foundation printed her 58-page booklet, *Greek Costumes*, which illustrates and describes 20 men's costumes in addition to 21 women's costumes (**Photos 3**). Collecting, or rather rescuing, men's folk costumes is generally quite difficult, because the men typically wear out all but one or two of the components (namely, the dressiest), since the clothing is intended chiefly for work, not identification. In her subsequent booklet, *Women's Traditional Costume in Attica, Greece* (Náplion, 1988) (**Photo 4**), one notices that the rare photographs that include men show them moving across the decades from traditional, to half-urban/half-rural, to entirely urban clothes by 1930, while the women still maintain their fully traditional outfits.



**Photo 4:** Cover of Papantoníou's 1988 booklet, *Women's Traditional Costume in Attica, Greece*.





**Photo 5 above:** Jacket of Papantoniou's trilingual ***Greek Regional Costumes*** (1996), again showing the famous golden costume from Mesógeia, Attica, as in **Photo 2**.

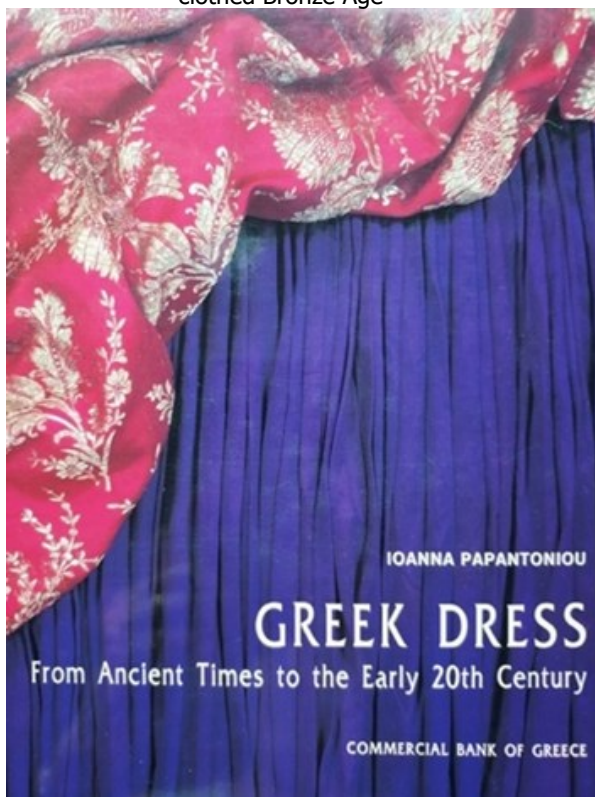
Finally, in 2000, Papantoniou published an even bigger volume, filled with yet more of her careful research and reaching back even farther: ***Greek Dress: from Ancient Times to the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century*** (Athens, 2000; 310 pp.) (**Photo 6**). For there are traits of traditional Greek dress (and dances!) that can be traced back to Classical Greek times and beyond. Printed by the Commercial Bank of Greece, the book is lavish in its illustrations, both color and black-and-white, and includes a much-needed map as well as an extensive bibliography, glossary, and index.

For those wishing to own an authentic reproduction of a particular Greek folk costume to dance in, I noticed a little sentence on (unnumbered) p. 7 of the smaller ***Dora Stratou*** booklet, stating: "Costume copies made to order." !! I have no idea whether this service is still available, but it would be worth asking.

—Elizabeth Wayland Barber

1996 saw the publication of Papantoniou's handsome 221-page ***Greek Regional Costumes***, with its text in Greek, English, and French (**Photo 5**). Filled with old black-and-white as well as modern color photographs (a few of which also appeared in her 1981 booklet), this tome traces Greek costume history from 1835 to 1945 and includes textile and costume glossaries in each of the three languages. After all, most Greeks today do not own or wear, let alone make, such clothes, and don't know the terminology either. Nor are there any more of the warehouse-like stores where one could buy old costume pieces in the 1970s and 1980s, when village women pretty much completely moved over to European urban dress.

**Photo 6 below:** Jacket of Papantoniou's treatise (2000) that goes all the way back to the elegantly clothed Bronze Age





# CHOREO GEOGRAPHY: GREECE

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*The following article is from the Federation archives.*

No other country in the Balkan Peninsula draws as much interest from westerners as Greece, for several reasons. Not only is it the "Cradle of Western Civilization," with astounding ruins proving the magnificence of its "Golden Age," the country is a major destination for tourists seeking the exotic sights and sounds of its land and people.

Perhaps this fascination of Greece evolves from the writings of Western European travelers as long ago as the 16th Century, continually embellished by those who came later. The Romantic Age of the mid 19th Century colored the stories even more, with tales of the Greeks and their Turkish occupiers. Europeans, and Americans, envisioned a place of romance and history and exotic traditions.

Folk dancers are perhaps a bit more realistic than that; after all, they are interested in the dance and music of Greece just as they are of any other country. But many who do not dance and never heard of a "syrtos" find their aesthetic buttons pushed by the multifaceted sounds of Greek music. It is small wonder that motion pictures of Greece, "Zorba," "Never on Sunday," and others are remembered mostly for their wonderful music which falls favorably on western ears.

Greece is one of the most diverse countries of Europe, having perhaps more coastline than any country of its size anywhere. The sea intrudes deeply into the interior and provides a living to a large number of the people. Rugged interior mountains divide isolated valleys and rocky soils yield little to the farmer or the herdsman over much of the land, long since denuded of trees by Venetian ship builders centuries ago. Sheep and goats and olives seem to be the major agricultural products.

The ethnic regions of Macedonia and Thrace spread their southern areas into northern Greece. Gentle Epirus and rocky Thessaly complete the northern part of the country; Central Greece extends south and ends in a point with Athens and its port city of Piraeus. Extending to the west, the slender Isthmus of Corinth leads to the ancient site of Sparta, the Peloponnesus, now turned to an artificial island by the Corinth Canal.

The balance of the Greek world is comprised of its many justly famous islands, each with its own distinct

culture: Crete, Kefalonia, Rhodes, Lesbos; names which evoke echoes of ancient gods and heroes.

Dance permeated Greek society throughout its history, though modern industrial life has destroyed and altered much of it. Dances we think of as "Panhellenic" have spread over the country only recently with mass communication and migration to the cities. Formerly, each tiny village and valley had its own dances with its own musicians and songs.

It is truly unfair to both reader and writer to attempt to describe the complexity of Greek dance in so small a space. One can only be amazed by the unending flow of dances brought to us by Greek teachers. It is worthwhile, however, to identify a few of the dances most frequently encountered and to take a look at what they represent.

"Vari hassapikos" ("heavy" hassapikos) was originally known as the "fisherman's dance" and is traditionally danced by two or three men, each improvising the dance as he leads it, dancing in his own movement style, followed with perfect imitation by his fellows. (See cover.) When leaders change, so does the dance, often dramatically, as the new leader dances his favorite figures in his own personal style. The dance is one of the most intimate of all folk dances, it is shared by these two or three men and it would be unthinkable for another to join them.

"Hassaposerviko" is the "light" hassapikos, moving quickly and lightly to the right in a more open and welcoming dance.

Of course, "syrtos" and "kalamatianos" are well-known to Greeks and folk dancers alike and differ primarily in rhythm; the "syrtos" ("dragging") is in an even 2/4 meter, while the "kalamatianos" (from "Kalamata") is a livelier 7/16 rhythm.

"Tsamikos" is an interesting dance, appreciated more by the dedicated dancer than the beginner for its hypnotic, yet seemingly uninteresting figure. Watch, carefully, for you will see the dancers from the rural mountains lift the leg high for each step, while those from the city will skim across the smooth floor in a quick, almost nervous movement.

Take a good look at a Greek class. Watch for the schedule of Greek festivals, and join in the fun and fascination of Greek dance.

*Richard Duree*

# CALENDAR

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## OCTOBER

- 3-5 *Los Angeles Greek Fest*, St. Sophia, 1324 Normandie Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90006 <https://lagreekfest.com/> This is a cashless event - only debit / credit cards, or "tap to pay"
- 4 *English Country Dance Playford-to-the-Present Ball* <https://culvercityecd.com/playford-present-english-country-dance-ball/>
- 4 *Greek Rebetiko Trio* at Pepperdine University 24255 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, CA 90263 7:30 pm <https://arts.pepperdine.edu/events/2025-2026-season/greek-rebetiko-trio-25-26.htm>
- 4 *Santa Barbara Old Time Fiddlers Festival* - Concerts, music and dance workshops, instrument petting zoo. 10 am - 5 pm \$20 advance ticket, \$25 at the door, \$5 students. 304 N. Los Carneros Road, Goleta, CA 93117 <https://fiddlersfestival.org/>
- 11 *Irvine Global Village Festival 2025* 10 am–6 pm at Great Park in Irvine. "Celebrating 24 Years of Food, Art, Music & Irvine's Diverse Heritage and Culture" The Bulgarian group PCHELA is one of the sponsors. <https://cityofirvine.org/irvine-global-village-festival>
- 11 ***Greek night at San Diego Folk Dance Center, 5500 Grossmont Center Dr. Suite 269, La Mesa, CA 91942. Tony Petroulias will teach, Parea will play (Parea rescheduled from Sept 13)*** [www.folkdancecenter.org/newsletter.html](http://www.folkdancecenter.org/newsletter.html)
- 11-12 *St Mary Armenian Festival* 146 22nd St Costa Mesa, Sat 3-10 pm, Sun noon - 6 pm [www.facebook.com/StMaryArmenianFestival](http://www.facebook.com/StMaryArmenianFestival)
- 12 *LA VOICES: A World of Jewish Music* with The LA Jewish Symphony and dance group Keshet Chaim Wilshire Ebell Theatre, 4401 W. 8th St, Los Angeles, CA 90005 4-5:30 pm [www.eventbrite.com/e/la-voices-a-world-of-jewish-music-with-the-la-jewish-symphony-tickets-1471484974169](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/la-voices-a-world-of-jewish-music-with-the-la-jewish-symphony-tickets-1471484974169)
- 18 *Macedonian Festival* at St. Mary's, 10550 Whittier Blvd., Whittier, with live music by Chris Bajmakovic. Free admission, dance group performance, traditional food. Noon to evening
- 18 *Pan-Arcadian Federation Celebration of Alosis Tis Tripolitsas* St. John Greek Orthodox Church, 405 N. Dale Ave, Anaheim. Social hour 6:30, Dinner 7:30 - \$85 or \$20 after 10 pm for dancing only. Music by Takis Kokostas, Rania Stamos, Nikos Spasiotis, Agravtos Magkaris, Dimitris Papakostas
- 24 *Bulgarian Dance Party* with Bulgarika at LIFE Balkan Dancers. See ad.
- 28 *Danse Macabre Mini Ball* info [historicalteaanddance@gmail.com](mailto:historicalteaanddance@gmail.com) registration: <https://historicalteaanddance.org/>
- Oct 31 – Nov 2 *Fall Camp in Simi Valley - Catherine Rudin (and other, local teachers)*** <https://fallcamp.org/> See ad.

## NOVEMBER

- 1 ***Bulgarika at San Diego Folk Dance Center*** [www.folkdancecenter.org/newsletter.html](http://www.folkdancecenter.org/newsletter.html)
- 1 Bulgarian Performing Group *Xorotroptzi Annual Concert* at Hermosa Beach Community Theater, 729 Pier Ave, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254 4:30-7:30 [www.tickettailor.com/events/xorotroptzi/1841176](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/xorotroptzi/1841176) [www.facebook.com/events/1318752616058615](http://www.facebook.com/events/1318752616058615)
- 2 *Colonial Tea Social* - info [historicalteaanddance@gmail.com](mailto:historicalteaanddance@gmail.com) registration at <https://historicalteaanddance.org/>
- 8-9 *17th Annual Armenian Festival* in Rancho Mirage, St. Garabed Armenian Apostolic Church of the Desert, 38905 Monterey Ave, Rancho Mirage, CA, 92270. Authentic Armenian food, DJ, live

dance performances and family-friendly activities. \$5 admission, free parking Nov 8: 11am-7pm / Nov 9: 11am-4pm

15 *So Cal Cretans Association Annual Dinner Dance* 75th Year - at St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church Trinity Ballroom, 788 S. Rosemead, Pasadena. Live music with Nikos Manioudakis Save the date

16 *Armenian Workshop* with Naomi Eshoo, hosted by Conejo Valley Folk Dancers 1:30—4 pm, Hillcrest Center for the Arts, 403 W, Hilcrest Dr., Thousand Oaks

**22 Live music with Tzidia at San Diego Folk Dance Center, 5500 Grossmont Center Dr. Suite 269, La Mesa, CA 91942**

## DECEMBER

5 *DakhaBrakha* Ukrainian "ethno-chaos" at The Wallis, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd. Beverly Hills, CA 90210, 7:30 pm <https://thewallis.org/show-details/dakhabrakha>

7 *St. Nicholas Ball dance review* - <https://historicalteaanddance.org/>

14 *St. Nicholas Holiday Ball* - info [historicalteaanddance@gmail.com](mailto:historicalteaanddance@gmail.com) registration at <https://historicalteaanddance.org/>

20-21 *Nouveau Chamber Ballet's annual Nutcracker* 2 pm at Fullerton College Campus Theatre, 321 E. Chapman Ave., Fullerton CA 92832. Tom Bozigian will again stage the Russian dance. <https://nouveauchamberballet.com/> for more info.

**31 New Year's Eve Dance Party at Pasadena Folk Dance Co-op, St James Episcopal Church, 1325 Monterey Rd, South Pasadena, CA 91030. 7-10 pm. Live music by Fifth Friday, plus all-request recorded dance music Admission: \$10, Potluck refreshments**

## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Oct 10 – 12 *North South Teaching Seminar* in Aptos, CA. Open to anyone who wants to improve their teaching techniques. Teachers in 2025 are Sonia Dion and Cristian Florescu. Registration contact: [northsouthfolkdance@gmail.com](mailto:northsouthfolkdance@gmail.com)

Oct 24, *Łowiczanie Polish Folk Ensemble Concert*, Walnut Creek. See ad.

Nov 28-30 *Kolo Festival*, San Francisco Croatian American Cultural Center Master Dance Teachers Sonja and Christian, Tanya Dimitrov, Roberto Bagnoli, John Morovich Music from Fanfare Zambaleta, Sinovi, Orchestra Unbound and more <https://kolofestival.org/> See ad.

## OUT OF STATE

Oct 9-12 *Far West Conference* in Vancouver WA <https://far-west.org>

Oct 17-18 *9th Annual Bulgarian Folklore Festival Tupan Bie* Phoenix Center for the Arts – Phoenix, AZ <https://tupanbie.wixsite.com/tupanbie-phoenix> [www.facebook.com/events/30514512728148083/?active\\_tab=about](https://www.facebook.com/events/30514512728148083/?active_tab=about)



# Fall Camp

Oct. 31 – Nov. 2, 2025

with Catherine Rudin presenting an eclectic mix

of classic and new dances,

**PLUS four local teachers presenting winning dances from  
this year's Stockton Folk Dance Camp**

Dance in a beautiful climate-controlled room, located in a tranquil, park-like setting. Enjoy teaching and review sessions, evening dance parties, and other activities. The weekend includes 5 meals (Friday dinner through Sunday breakfast), snacks, and two nights in motel-style rooms (with heating and air conditioning, private bath, bedding, and towels). **Space is limited. Register soon!**

Fall Camp is at the Brandeis-Bardin Campus of the American Jewish University, 1101 Peppertree Lane, Brandeis, CA 93064. (It is near Simi Valley in Southern California, just south of the 118 Freeway.)

Prices this year are lower for double and triple occupancy,

and all prices are again subsidized by the Folk Dance Federation of California, South.

Single room	\$540
Double room	\$440 per person
Triple room	\$395 per person
Commuter (No room, 5 meals)	\$270 per person

Please enter an amount from above .....\$\_\_\_\_\_ One form per person

Sunday lunch \$ 27 ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_



Please consider an **entirely optional donation**

to help keep our prices affordable .....\$\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed:**    \$\_\_\_\_\_

Refund policy: You may cancel until Oct. 6 for a full refund. We can't guarantee full refunds after then.

First name (for your badge)\_\_\_\_\_ Last name\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_ Phone(s)\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of roommate(s)\_\_\_\_\_

We will try to accommodate special dietary requirements\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact (name & phone)\_\_\_\_\_

**The Federation requires campers to sign a [General Liability waiver](#),  
which is available on [FallCamp.org](#)**

**If you have already signed that waiver for another Federation event, check here: [ ]**

Please complete a separate **registration form** (and waiver if needed) for each camper.

Make your check payable to **Folk Dance Federation of CA, South**


**Mail** it with your form(s) and waiver(s) (if needed) to:

Mindy Belli    321 S Vista del Canon, Anaheim, CA 92807

Questions not answered here or on [FallCamp.org](#) ? Email Mindy at [DanceFallCamp@gmail.com](mailto:DanceFallCamp@gmail.com).



First-timers  
get  
\$30 off



Students pay  
50%  
with ID

# CALIFORNIA KOLO FESTIVAL

28-30 November, 2025

Croatian American Cultural Center, San Francisco



Cristian & Sonia



Tanya Dimitrov



Roberto Bagnoli



Maria Bebelekova



John Morovich



Fanfare Zambaleta



Sinovi



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Veseljatsi "The Revelers"



Orkestar Unbound

**and so much more!!!**

Experience the Soul of World Music & Dance!

[www.kolofestival.org](http://www.kolofestival.org)

# LAST DANCE

---

## MICHELE SOTIROU

Michele Sotirou, who attended various groups with her autistic daughter in a stroller, has died. Her son, Juan Leon, studied with the Bulgarian musician Dimitar Trifonov.

## CHRIS YESETA

Chris Yeseta, leader of the Aman tamburitza band, died in August, as announced by his brother Tom.

## PRESTON ASHBOURN

We in the Gypsy Folk Ensemble often said Preston was born to dance. He tried all types of dancing, from ballet to tap to ballroom to Polynesian and everything in-between. He took his first dance lesson at age two and never regretted it. Formal dance classes began at Call's of Long Beach with foxtrot, waltz, and Latin ballroom. He continued his classes through high school, inviting his dance partner from these classes to his prom. So many times he told me how they showed up his classmates with their dancing that night.

His first wife told me how he was always the most sought after partner at family parties. All of her sisters and aunts begged for a dance.

After his divorce, being newly single he looked for non-partner dance evenings. He walked into a local bar for dinner in Long Beach and discovered the male Greeks hanging around and dancing. This was eye-opening to him. This being a port town, Greek sailors were often there. The other men taught him the ways of the Taverna (there were no women there). This was where he learned Hasapiko as a buddy dance, and mastered Zeibekiko and how to enjoy Ouzo.

He also discovered Donna Tripp's classes at the JCC and Narodni. This was where he started folk dancing. Many years later he would look back at these years with great fondness.

In folkdance he could really see how culture and language helped him in folk dancing. Many years later he and Dennis Boxell, who was a Balkan language expert, also talked about this.

When he joined Dunaj Ensemble with Richard Duree he put his German to work. He would continue learning about languages and culture with folk dancing. They were interwound, he would often say. A few years later when he joined Gypsy Ensemble, he could put his love of languages and dance together as a dance professional in dance shows.

When Gypsy developed their Polynesian show, he was able to enjoy some dances he had dabbled in as a youth. He quickly became good at them, plus he put his Tahitian language knowledge to use. New shows and dance classes were always being created, so he was able to master something rare for American men, the ability to shimmy well. He really enjoyed being an entertainer. Everywhere we went he was usually the first one on the dance floor and last off. At the Balls of the Civil War and Ragtime Eras, as I was signing us in, his dance card was instantly filled with none left for me.

One phrase he often said was "I want to die dancing." It was a joke, but he sure tried. He danced everywhere and taught me not to waste good dance music standing around but dance. "So what if we are shopping, it's time to dance."

Enjoy your favorite dance in his memory. See you soon on the dance floor.

*Nancy Milligan*



Photo courtesy of Gypsy Folk Ensemble



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## **INDIA:** Jan 24-Feb. 7, Nov. 3-18, 2026

Delhi, Udaipur, Pushkar, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Agra, Varnasi, Pushkar

## **Middle East**

### **EGYPT:** Feb 19-March 1. 2026

Cairo, Nile River cruise, Luxor, Aswan

### **ISRAEL:** March 1-12

Led by Lee Friedman and guided by Joe Freedman: Jerusalem, Masada, Tel Aviv, Galilee, Haifa, Safed, Golan Heights.

## **Eastern Europe-The Balkans**

### **ALBANIA, GREECE, MACEDONIA and KOSOVO ext:** May 20-June 1-3

Led by Lee Otterholt, guided by Mili Mullanji: Tirana, Durres, Vlorë Folk Festival, Kruja, Gjirokaster, Saranda, Berat, Lake Prespa, Ochrid

### **CROATIA:** July 6-20

Led by Lee Otterholt Dubrovnik Folk Festival, Island of Korčula, Island of Hvar, Split, Zadar, Zagreb Folk Festival

### **BALKAN SPLENDOR: 5-COUNTRIES** July 26-August 11

Led by Ventsi Milev: Bulgaria, Macedonia, Greece, Albania, Serbia,

### **GREECE and the GREEK ISLANDS:** Oct 3-16

Led by Lee Otterholt, Maroula Konti, guide: Athens, Nauplia, Sparta, Olympia, Delphi, Meteora, Mycenae, and Epidaurus.

**Greek Island Cruise:** Mykonos, Crete, Rhodes, Patmos, Kusadasi

## **Western Europe**

### **SCANDINAVIA:** June 9-23

Led by Lee Otterholt: Oslo, Gothenburg, Helsingborg (Elsinore), Copenhagen.

### **IRELAND:** Aug 1-13

Led by Lee Friedman and guided by Kay Cleary: Galway, Connemara, Aran islands, Kerry, Cork, Blarney, Dublin.

### **SPAIN:** Sept 11-24

Malaga, Ronda, Cadiz, Seville, Cordoba, Granada

## **South America**

### **PERU-Nazca and Peruvian Amazon ext:** May 20-29.

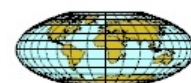
Lima, Cusco, Machu Picchu, Puno, Sacred Valley, Lake Titicaca, Peruvian Amazon, Nazca

### **BRAZIL:** Nov 2-13

Led by Lee Otterholt Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Iguassu Falls

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# DONNA TRIPP

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## DONNA LOUISE TRIPP

**DEC. 28, 1928 – JULY 27, 2025**

*Kriss Larson wrote this about Donna when he heard of her passing:*

"In every life there are certain people who come along that make a significant difference in what your life turns out to be. For me, Donna Tripp was such a person. When I nervously wandered into folk dancing about 1982, I was shy and socially inept. Once Donna could see I had an old skill at accordion and liked the accordion music I heard on the folk dance records, she was encouraging—letting me take home her LPs during the week to transcribe tunes off of them, and letting me practice on the dancers at the weekly Long Beach Class. Then she encouraged others to join with me to make a band.

Working with others to make a band—make something happen as a group—is not a natural skill for me. I think the band has been a major social skill learning experience for me.

I'm hardly the only person Donna has affected as a skilled and charismatic dance leader. All of us in south LA County and Orange County have been affected by her talents and enthusiasm. We can all give thanks to her for that."

Kriss Larson's heartfelt words ring mightily in the folk dance world. Donna made a huge difference in the lives of so many dancers. Her passing leaves a huge hole. On the other hand, we can all delight in the memories we have of Donna on the dance floor, whether dancing or teaching, with her bright smile and obvious enjoyment of the movements.

We know Donna as an international folk dancer, but that is not the arena in which she began her dancing. Donna was originally sent to ballet class at the age of 3 to correct her feet. She loved ballet dancing and would have made a career of it except she was too tall at 5'10". Thwarted by her height, but not ready to quit ballet altogether, she found she had a knack for teaching ballet, and did so at the prestigious MacPhail School of Music in Minneapolis.

Donna met Doug Tripp in Los Angeles, and he asked her to marry him after only 4 weeks! Doug (who passed away in 2021 after 68 years of marriage) was also a

fantastic dancer. They both performed in the Gandy Dancers until around the mid-seventies. Donna also became a member of Betyárok, a Hungarian performing group beginning in 1970 with Elsie Dunin. Donna often spoke of the good times she had performing with both groups.

Donna shared her deep knowledge of international folk dance with others when she taught at the Long Beach Jewish Community Center beginning in 1961. Her classes were well-attended and began the careers of many a life-long international folk dancer.

Around 1970, Donna began to learn dances from Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden, Denmark) and Nordic dances from Finland at a Folk Dance Conference in 1970. Donna especially was taken by the dances from these countries. She continued taking classes, attending Scandinavian workshops, and even went to Sweden to receive her Silver medal as she was judged against the standard of a variety of Swedish dances. Her partner for all these dances was

Ted Martin. Ted and Donna began teaching Scandinavian classes in Anaheim beginning about 1980. Many international dancers joined them in learning these unique couple dances.



Donna and  
Ted Martin in  
Norwegian costumes 1995

In 1984, the members of the Laguna Folk Dance Festival asked Donna to demonstrate Scandinavian dances at the festival. Donna pulled together couples from her dance class, choreographed a suite (the first of many), and scrambled for as many costumes as possible.

This novel type of folk dance was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience. As a result, Donna created the Scandia Folk Dancers of Southern California in that same year. The Scandia Dancers have traveled to many places in California and performed at almost every type of Scandinavian festival throughout the state. The group also has performed at private parties, weddings, parades, and even a Cinco de Mayo event!

Donna's Scandia Dancers were invited to travel to Europe to perform. The dance group under her guidance performed for the Folk Music Week in Ål, Norway in 2002, and then continued on to Lahti, Finland for the Pispalan Sottisi Festival along with other international groups. The group was so successful under Donna's tutelage that they were invited back to perform at the Hollola ja Marta Festival in Tampere, Finland in 2005. In both cases, while performing in Finland, the Finns often asked why Americans would do Finnish dances. The group always replied in order to introduce others to the Finnish culture, to maintain the culture in the U.S., and because we liked the dances and the music.

It wasn't just that Donna could teach folk dances, but that she could teach these dances with precision, helping the dancers see how small corrections would make the dance more authentic, and easier for the dancers. She was always so pleased when someone mastered a particularly difficult step, and would reward them with kind words and a big smile. Because she was able to develop dancers, especially for Scandinavian dances, she was able to choreograph bigger and more expansive suites for the Scandia Dancers. She had a great eye for putting dances together, and was especially masterful at choreographing transitions between one dance and another, making the suites one long continuous vision of movement.

In recognition of the many efforts Donna made to contribute to the health and continuity of international folk dance, Donna was awarded the first ever Southern California Lifetime Achievement Award in 2015 by the Laguna International Dancers.

Donna did have a life outside of dance (which surprised most of us!) She was the mother to Louise and

Philip, and grandmother to 5, and great-grandmother to 2. She worked for the Bank of America for 27 years as a Business Analyst. Donna was also an avid outdoorswoman. She loved to ski, hike, backpack, and canoe. She was also a voracious reader of history and the news.

Donna's participation in folk dance was more than just a hobby; it was her avocation. What she created was a legacy of learning, of teaching, and a passion for seeing the world through dance. So many people have her to thank for their participation in folk dancing. She will be missed, but more importantly, she will be remembered for her many contributions to the folk dance world.

--- Stefanie Holzman



Donna in her Finnish costume at the Finnish festival in 2002.

## POETRY CORNER

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### Wondering

Wondering... if I reached out my hand to you,  
Would you reach back in wonderment, too?  
Or would you reject me, hesitate or ignore?  
Should I risk it if I can't be sure?

And so I close my heart, and I retreat  
From every strange-looking person that I meet,  
And we never dance the communal joys  
That nurture, succor, and fill the voids,  
Never move together in patterns of grace,  
Never turning to see your smiling face.  
— *Camille Dull*

### A Dancer's Feet

I watched yours.  
By chance, a couple dance;  
welcoming smile,  
a nice style.  
“Enjoyed dancing with you”  
“Let's do it again”  
And we did, every week since then  
— *Don Krotser*



# CLUB DIRECTORY

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Most groups welcome beginning dancers. The groups with an \* below have sessions specifically for beginners.

*For changes, additions, or deletions email [directory@folkdancescene.org](mailto:directory@folkdancescene.org)*

## Federation Clubs

**Bay Osos Folk Dancers:** Tue 11:00-3:00. South Bay Community Center, 2180 Palisades Ave, **Los Osos**. 818-203-5812 [wburke.dance@gmail.com](mailto:wburke.dance@gmail.com) Billy Burke, [BayOsosFolkDancers.org](http://BayOsosFolkDancers.org).

**Cabrillo Folk Dancers:** Tue 7:00-9:00. Balboa Park. Balboa Park Club, 2144 Pan American, **SAN DIEGO**. (858) 459-1336 [gbsham@gmail.com](mailto:gbsham@gmail.com) Georgina, 858-766-1095 [michaelleonardcreditor@gmail.com](mailto:michaelleonardcreditor@gmail.com) Michael-Leonard Creditor, <https://sites.google.com/site/cabrillodancers>

**Cerritos Folk Dancers:** 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Tue 5:00-7:45 Cerritos Senior Center, 12340 South St, **CERRITOS**. (626) 500-5035

[chiangwenli@yahoo.com](mailto:chiangwenli@yahoo.com) Wen Chiang

**Conejo Valley Folk Dancers:** Wed 7:30-9:30. Hillcrest Center for the Arts, 403 W Hillcrest Dr, **THOUSAND OAKS**. [paula.davis@bucknell.edu](mailto:paula.davis@bucknell.edu), Paula, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/265181362778249>

**Fantasy Folk Dance Club:** Sun 3:00 - 7:00. St Thomas Aquinas Church, 1501 S Atlantic Blvd, **MONTREY PARK**. [vincentyhcheng@gmail.com](mailto:vincentyhcheng@gmail.com) 626-429-9008 Vincent Cheng. Sat 10-noon. Langley Senior Center, 400 W Emerson Ave., **Monterey Park**. (626) 673-2184 Peter Lin

**Folk Dance Center:** Wed 9:30-11:30am, Sat 7-10 . Oasis Wellness Center, 5500 Grossmont Center Dr, **La Mesa**. [jcknappster@gmail.com](mailto:jcknappster@gmail.com) John, [www.folkdancecenter.org](http://www.folkdancecenter.org)

**Int'l Folk Dance Club - Laguna Woods:** Tue 2:00-4:00. Clubhouse 1 Multipurpose Room 2, 24232 Calle Aragon, **LAGUNA WOODS**. (949) 939-0604 Marilyn Michael Yurk. First-time dancers call Marilyn for gate clearance.

**Kypseli Greek Folk Dancing:** Occasional Sunday live music events. 310-508-9676 Anne Sirota. [www.kypseli.events](http://www.kypseli.events)

**Laguna Int'l Dancers:** Wed 6:00-8:30 at Clubhouse 2, 24112 Moulton Pkwy, **LAGUNA WOODS**. Fri 1:30-4:00 at Clubhouse 7 24111 Moulton Pkwy, **Laguna Woods**. [leeotterholt@yahoo.com](mailto:leeotterholt@yahoo.com) Lee. Sun 6:00-8:00 on Zoom. [sollowayg@gmail.com](mailto:sollowayg@gmail.com) Greg. [www.lagunainternationaldancers.com](http://www.lagunainternationaldancers.com)

**Narodni Int'l Folkdancers:** Thu 8:00-10:00. Woman's Club of Bellflower, 9402 Oak St, **BELLFLOWER**. (562) 410-6964 [julithilona@gmail.com](mailto:julithilona@gmail.com) Julith Neff [www.narodni.org](http://www.narodni.org)

**Pasadena Folk Dance Co-op:** Fri 7:30-9:30. St James Episcopal Church, 1325 Monterey Ave. **South Pasadena**. **For current info contact:** [www.pasadenafolkdancecoop.org](http://www.pasadenafolkdancecoop.org); 626-808-0361, [info@pasadenafolkdancecoop.org](mailto:info@pasadenafolkdancecoop.org) Mari Werner

**Prescott Int'l Folkdancers:** Sun 2:00-4:00. Prescott Boys & Girls Club, 335 East Aubrey St, **PRESCOTT, AZ**. (928) 925-8995 Dick Weston [Prescott.intl.folkdancers@earthlink.net](mailto:Prescott.intl.folkdancers@earthlink.net). [www.prescottinternationalfolkdancers.org/](http://www.prescottinternationalfolkdancers.org/)

**Rainbow Senior Club:** Sun 2:00-5:00. Joslyn Senior Center 210 N. Chapel Ave, **ALHAMBRA**. (626) 456-1900 ksun310@yahoo.com Kevin Sun.

**Solvang Village Folk Dancers:** Thu & Sat 4:00-8:00. Buellton Recreation Center, 301 2nd St, **Buellton**. 3rd Sat 1:00-3:00. Jensen Square, Corner Alisal & Copenhagen, **Solvang** (805) 688-3397 dlh4362@gmail.com David Heald

**Ventura Int'l Folkdancers:** Tue&Thu 1:30-3:00. 2nd Sun 1:30-3:30 (may change due to conflicts - check with Mary). Ventura YMCA, 3760 Telegraph Rd, **Ventura**. Non-members check with Mary first. (805) 667-9037 voice mcowen\_3@msn.com Mary Kerrigan.

**Vintage Israeli Dancing:** One Sat per month 8:16-12:00. Danzmundo World Dance & Fitness Studio (DWDFS), 16733 Ventura Blvd., #13, **ENCINO**. (310) 351-2166 jrbythec@aol.com Jim Rothman. www.vintageisraelidancing.org

**West Valley Folk Dancers:** Fri 2:00-4:00. Canoga Park Sr. Ctr. 7326 Jordan Ave. **Canoga Park**. (818) 979-5030. jaymichtom@yahoo.com. Jay Michtom, psw20@icloud.com Paul Waller, WestValleyFolkDancers.org

## Exhibition Groups

**Karpatok Hungarian Folk Ensemble:** United Hungarian House, 1975 Washington, **LOS ANGELES**. (805) 341-9640 sissykf@earthlink.net Sissy Keresztes-Fischer. Www.KarpatokFolkEnsemble.com

**Krakusy Polish Folk Dance Ensemble:** Wed 8:00-10:00, Fri 7:00-9:00, Sat 2:30-4:00. Our Lady of the Bright Mount, 3424 W Adams Blvd, **LOS ANGELES**. (626) 827-7338 elistarr@yahoo.com Elizabeth Romuzga. Www.krakusy.com

**Nevenka East European Folk Ensemble:** Contact: Jennifer Jurick 818-519-2034, info@nevenka.org

**Scandia Dancers:** Thu 7:30-9:30. (714) 356-7745 sholzman1@verizon.net Stefanie Holzman

**Westchester Lariats:** Mon 4:00-9:00. Holy Nativity Church, 6700 W. 83rd St, **LOS ANGELES**. 310-913-5736 elizvalla@gmail.com Elizabeth Kane. Www.WestchesterLariats.org

## Associate & Non-Federation Clubs

**Caltech Folkdancers:** Tue 7:30. Caltech Campus, Dabney Hall, parking on California Blvd. or Throop Church, 300 Los Robles, **Pasadena**. (626) 797-5157 Nancy Milligan. **Not currently dancing**

**Claremont Israeli Dancers (assoc):** Mon 7:00-10:00 Masonic Lodge, 272 W. 8th St, **CLAREMONT**. (909) 921-7115 Yael. www.meetup.com/israeli-folk-dancers/

**Desert Dancers:** Thu 7:00-9:00 Nov-April. Hi Desert Dance Center, 725 S. Gateway St, **RIDGECREST**. (760) 371-5669 Nora Nuckles

**Desert Int'l Folk Dancers(assoc):** Thu 3:00-5:00 Nov-Apr. Community Room, Mizell Center, 480 South Sunrise Way, **PALM SPRINGS**. (760) 342-1297 Helen Smith

**Friday Night L.I.F.E.(assoc):** Fri 8:00-11:00. LA DanceFit Studio, 10936 Santa Monica Blvd **WEST L.A** worldance1@gmail.com Sherry Cochran. www.lifebalkandancers.com

**\*Foothill Folk Dancers:** Thu 8:00-10:00. Nourishing Spirits Center @ St. George's Episcopal Church, 808 Foothill Blvd., **LA CAÑADA** (818) 790-8523 JanRayman@charter.net www.Foothill.Dance

**\*Israeli Dancing @ AJU-Natalie & Pat:** Mon 10:30am-1:00, noon-1:00(Beg); Thu 10:30am-11:30. American Jewish Univ Dance Studio, 15600 Mulholland, **L.A** 818-642-3585 Pat Jordan

**Israeli Dancing-Yoni Carr:** Mon 7:00-11:30 Beginners at 7:00. Infinity Sport Dance Center, 4428 Convoy St, **SAN DIEGO**. (619) 227-0110 Yoni

**Kolo Festival(assoc):** Thanksgiving weekend. **San Francisco**. bill@kolofestival.org Bill Cope. kolofestival.org

**San Diego Folk Dancers:** Mon 7:00-9:00. Balboa Park, Balboa Park Club, 2144 Pan American Way, **SAN DIEGO**. 858-722-0489 Yuegenia@yahoo.com. Chin Yu

**Santa Barbara Balkan Folk Dancers:** Wed 8:00-10:00PM. Oak Park Stage, corner Junipero and Calle Real, **SANTA BARBARA**. soriasusan@gmail.com Susan Soria, or michalcathy@cox.net (805.895.4885) Michal Lynch

**Santa Barbara Int'l Folk Dancers:** In-person but schedule is in flux. Contact Michal Lynch for info michalcathy@cox.net, 805-895-4885.

**Southern Nevada Int'l FD:** Thu 4:00-6:00. Ballroom Addiction, 2301 Renaissance Dr., **Las Vegas, NV**. hugagiraffe@cox.net Eileen Hug

**UCLA Ballroom Club & UCLA Int'l Folkdancers:** Cultural, Historical & Ballroom: Thu 7-9. Kerckhoff Hall Room 135 **WESTWOOD**. RSVP required HistoricalDance@yahoo.com

**\*Westside Daytime Folkdancers(assoc):** Wed 12:00-2. Culver City Senior Center 4095 Overland Blvd, **Culver City**. 2nd & 4th Sat 7:00-8:30. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1260 18th St., **Santa Monica** sandysmail1000@gmail.com, (310) 391-7382 Sandy Helperin

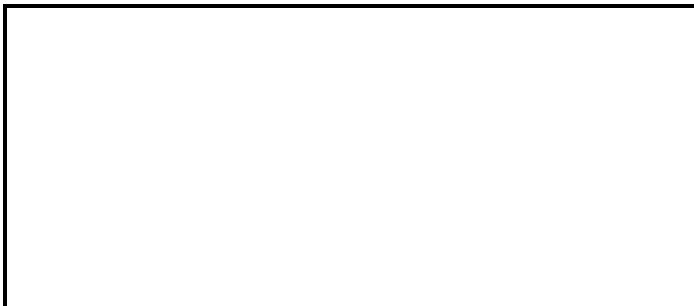


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