



# Prez Sez by Terry Abrahams

We're moving on! Only one more issue before camp! So, sign up, send \$ to John and if you are deciding whether to buy the T-shirt or not, the design is shown below.

Something I've failed to mention is our Olga Princi scholarship fund. FFDC has a special fund to help a needy or worthy person get to camp. If you have someone in your group who you think would like to come to camp and would be of value to your group, send me their name and the reasons you are suggesting them. I will put their name up to the board and we will make a decision. I don't think we've ever turned anyone down, but we need to know ahead of time to make arrangements for them. If you have any questions about this, let me know.

I've had some awful thoughts that the VanGeels shot their wad on their first visit to us, that they won't be as good this time, but I hear from other places that they are just as good as the first time! Whew!

As you noticed in the last issue, we will not have to bring snacks, which, for those of us who did, is a royal pain in the patootie. Our desserts will be served at snack time, along with added things to make us happy. I've talked about the weekend so much, I have nothing more to say at the moment – just register and get ready for a great weekend. Good hotel, good teachers, good dances, good food, good friends – have I left anything out?

Here's the T-shirt design. What color will it be? I haven't decided but I am leaning towards gold.

Final note - there are two great articles about how good dancing is for all of us - check the Footnotes section and enjoy the read.



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**Editor's Note:** newsletter articles should be submitted using the "[newsletter@floridafolkdancer.org](mailto:newsletter@floridafolkdancer.org)" email address. Thank you Vicki

# Club Reports In

## Orlando International Folk Dance Club By Pat Henderson



Our group was not able to start our new season on September 4 in the aftermath of Hurricane Dorian. It turned out to be a non-event for Orlando. Since the road to our driveway was still a mess from all the rain and pipe project, we met at Nicki's condo in Winter Park on September 11 and 18. Finally, on

September 25, we were back in the dance studio behind our home and all is well. The road is much better but the pipe project is not done so the road is not redone yet either.

Our group was well represented with 18 members of our group attending the Fall Fling in Melbourne Village on October 5. Thanks to John and his group for planning and all the work on the meals that day.

We had fun with a triple birthday celebration for Bobby, Gary and Susan on October 9. Then on October 16, we had an Oktoberfest and a birthday celebration for Ruth Ann. (See photo) We had a great time among a lot of German decorations. We

cannot get any men to wear their lederhosen so we used them as decorations!

Traveling since the last newsletter was Susan Talcott to Nebraska where her son from California and daughter from Miami met her and they attended a

Nebraska Cornhusker football game. Bobby and I had a long weekend trip to Louisiana for his 55th high school reunion in Crowley in Cajun country. We enjoyed the Rice Festival, seeing family and then touring the Tabasco Factory on Avery Island.

In other news, Nicki Wise had knee replacement surgery on October 17 and is doing quite well. We expect to see her again at our Halloween Party on October 30.

We are not dancing on November 27 or December 25. However, we are going to have a New Year's Day Party from noon-6 pm on January 1. We will start with grilling hamburgers and hot dogs with dancing following lunch. Bring supplemental food items to share.



# Heard It From The Sarasota Grapeviners

## by Lynda Harris



ANDI'S BACK!!!

After resting up in September, the Grapeviners were very happy to welcome back our beloved teacher, Andi Kapplin.

We're dancing back in our regular home, The Bayfront Community Center. On Page 4, you'll find an invitation to our 40th Anniversary/Reunion Dance Party on Wednesday, January 22, 2020.

And below is our schedule for the next few months, along with some driving advice because – are you ready for this?! – “They” have decided to put in a round-about at the intersection of US 41 and 10th Street in Sarasota. PLUS they just started work on a roundabout at US 41 and Fruitville Rd. For those who aren't familiar with the area, let me explain why I am so incredulous at this decision.

#1. US 41 is at least four lanes at these intersections. I say “at least” because they keep subtracting and adding lanes, so who knows how wide it will end up being when the roundabouts are finished.

#2. The main entrance to the parking lot for the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall is – you guessed it – at the intersection of US 41 and 10th Street. An alternate route is via US 41 and Fruitville. The Van Wezel has 1,741 seats. So on a good night (not a full house, just a ¾ full house), that means somewhere in the neighborhood of 650 cars will be attempting to enter either the 10th Street or the Fruitville Road round-about from the Van Wezel parking lot within a matter of 15 minutes or so.

#3. And speaking of “time,” how's this for timing: construction on these two new roundabouts (in

addition to the one already under construction at US 41 and 14th Street) will continue thru “season.”

Seriously??! AARGH!!

You must be wondering by now why I'm ranting about this brilliant bit of infrastructure.

Simple: because those same intersections – which will, of course, be bursting and bustling with construction equipment and workers until at least Fall of 2020 – are the same intersections at the entrance to the Bayfront Community Center parking lot.

We're looking forward to many of you joining us at our “40th Party” on Wednesday, January 22, 2020. Just be forewarned that you might need a few extra minutes for your drive that night.

I've been in communication with the Sr. Communications Manager for Sarasota, and this is his recommended route into our parking lot during construction: “

Southbound (from the airport): US 41 to 10th Street.

Northbound (from downtown): Fruitville Road to Lemon Avenue or Orange Avenue North to 10th Street.

He assures me that “Access to the Van Wezel parking lot will continue to be maintained throughout the construction projects.” Then he adds: “41 Southbound would be the easiest.” Right. Sure it will. If you don't have a helicopter, that is.

Stay tuned for the latest traffic alerts in the next FFDC newsletter!

### Grapeviners' Schedule - November through January

We will be dancing from 7 pm until 9 pm at the Bayfront on these dates:

Wednesday, November 6, 13, and 20 (no dancing Thanksgiving week)

Wednesday, December 4, 11 and 18

Monday, December 23 and 30

Wednesday, January 8, 15 and 29

Wednesday, January 22, 7pm – 9:30pm – PARTY!!!

# The Grapeviners Are 40 Years Old - Let's Celebrate!

We will be having an Anniversary Celebration and Reunion on Wednesday, January 22, from 7 to 9:30 pm at the Bayfront Community Center, 803 N. Tamiami Trail, and we want to invite all Grapeviners—past and present—to come join us! Even if you've never danced with us, we'd love to have you as well. There won't be a regular charge for this evening's party, but a basket for donations will be available.

There will be a 50/50 raffle, and it will be an all request night. You may email up to three requests to Andi Kapplin: [andi@kapplin.com](mailto:andi@kapplin.com)

Please bring a snack to share—we will provide beverages, plates, napkins, etc. For those of you

who don't dance anymore, please stop by any way to say hi and celebrate with us! If you want to come, but need a ride, please call Susan Barach at

941-923-3302, who will try to make arrangements for you. It should be a fun evening and we would love to see as many people as possible attend!

Address and driving suggestions are in our article on Page 3.



## **HISTORY OF THE GRAPEVINERS**

*The International Folk Dance Group of Sarasota was originally started by Sydelle Singer in 1980. Sydelle, who passed away in September of 2008, was a well-known dance teacher in both the New York and Florida areas. The group held their dance sessions at the McIntosh Middle School and at that time, was known as "Singer's Dancers." When the group expanded to include summer dancing in 1986, John and Marie Millett became the summer teachers while Sydelle remained the winter teacher. At this time, the dance location was changed to the Unitarian Universalist Church in Sarasota and the group name was changed to the Grapeviners of Sarasota. We are referred to as "The Grapeviners" to this day.*

*In January of 1992, Sydelle left the Sarasota area and Ann Kessler, another teacher of international folk dance, ballroom dance, and line dance became the permanent teacher. Fred Miller assisted Ann with teaching while Marie continued to coordinate the group's activities.*

*In 1995, the group moved its sessions to the John Chidsey Bayfront Community Center where the sessions continue to the current day, every Wednesday night.*

*In September of 2005, Ann retired and the group asked Andi Kapplin to take over as the group's instructor. Andi, who has been dancing since she was 8 years old, remains the group's winter teacher. She is a wonderful dancer and instructor and has more dances in her head than any of us can believe.*

*During 2010, Marie retired as coordinator and "passed the baton" on to Judy Merkt and Susan Barach. Judy got "captured" by ballroom dance in late 2014 and no longer participates in the group. Susan remains the group's Coordinator and Treasurer during the winter, while in the summer, we have different people helping out.*

## Tampa Trivia by Terry Abrahams



Summer is over, Andi is back, having enjoyed her International, Israeli and Serbian groups that she attends. Lucky for us, she teaches us some of their dances. Ken (Israeli) is back, Judith has slowed

down from her trekking, but has written an article about the Balkan Camp, and I am back from Karmiel USA (Israeli Dance Camp), and Richmond, VA for the 15th annual Folk Fest with Jodi (my travel buddy).

We rounded it to a perfect weekend; Thursday we went to her Israeli Dance

group, then looked at pictures of all the countries she has been to since we don't travel together anymore. The festival ended Sunday at 1:00, and we just relaxed and looked at more pictures. She spent 28 days in the "stans" (i.e. Turkmenistan, so lots of



pictures to look at.) Monday we did some "thrifting" (one of our favorite things to do), then went to a friend's home where we attended a postcard party. There we wrote fancy cards to people in Kentucky to vote Blue, my first party like that. It was fun and interesting, as we all were of the same ilk and loved talking politics. Had a fabulous hamburger at a local joint where a guy brought his adorable dogs, and off to the airport.

We all went to the Fall Fling, and for Tampa, it's such a joy to dance with more than three other people. Thanks John and friends for hosting.

Judith organized a "reunion" party, and former dancers and relatives came and had a good time. A friend of her daughter's (a dancer) came to visit, which added to the fun. Big contra weekend going on – Fall Ball, Judith and I attended.

Vicki was off traveling to West Virginia and DC for more family weddings. The one in DC had a Polish component so lots of polkas! She still has nine unmarried nephews/nieces so the family festivities aren't done yet.

But now we are all looking forward to camp.

## Jim Gold Is Running For Office by Terry Abrahams and Jim Gold!

*Jim Gold, member of the Folk Dance Party, is running for the office of President of the United States. He is not only running, he is hopping, stepping, and jumping. He's running on the Right, the Left, and even on the Back and Forward. He can also turn around when necessary and can change positions at will. Instead of Trump-ing, he is jumping, Bidin' his time as he readies to Bern his way to the front, Warren-ing us to keep on dancin'. You can Beto on Jim. He is Amying to win. Not Yang-king your chain. Not Marianned to a special plan if things change. If you need a step re-Pete-d, he's willing to do it – will not Bull-y anyone into voting for him. His motto is "Hop and Change." He is not Tim-id. Book-er him for your next occasion. He will dance into your Tulsing heart. (Obviously I have too much time on my hands!)*

# Events

## Fall Fling by John Daly

Thanks to the thirty-five people who came to enjoy good dancing, good friends and good food at Fall Fling 2019. It was a great day.

Special thanks for all the delicious pot luck contributions and to Bernice, Fanny, Doris, Barbara, and Judy who organized and set out the meals. Our team in South Brevard may be small in number, but we make up for it in spirit.

And of course thanks to Bobby for bringing his selection of music and for keeping the dancing going while Terry and I snuck out to play some music.

Speaking of music, thanks to Vic Aijala who brought his accordion and provided live music for a set of waltzes, schottisches and polkas. He and wife Judy came to us from the Scandinavian music and dance world and we are thrilled to have them.

Of course we included Arnold's Circle and Mairi's Wedding in the program.

The Historic Community House in Melbourne Village is a marvelous venue for events like Fall Fling. The



Town of Melbourne Village is a small community that puts a great deal of effort into maintaining this venue. They are very aware of its unique value to the dance community. Hopefully we will be able to enjoy Fall Fling there for many more years.



# Balkan Week at Iroquois Springs by Judith Baizan



After some years of reading notices and wishing, I was finally going to experience a Balkan Dance Week! The Balkan Music and Dance Workshop Mendocino, a feature of the California woodlands camp for decades, eventually inspired an almost identical east coast version taking place a week or so afterwards, at the East European Folklife Center at Iroquois Springs, located in Rock Hill, New York. That's where I was headed!

Since the camp is located about equidistant from the three NYC airports, out-of-staters can fly into any of them and rent a car for the close to 3 hour drive to Rock Hill, or search out train and bus connections. I lucked into a quarter share of a rental car, to the camp and return to Newark airport, which came out to a very reasonable under \$100 figure.

At the camp the procedure was to remove all belongings from the cars, carry immediate needs, and have everything else labeled and ready for the camp staff to transport to our individual assigned lodgings. Just one person then removes the car to the parking area. Actually 2 "camps" are in session here, at the same time, but "their" cabins are separate, "their" mealtimes staggered, and "they" don't dance, so we rarely interact.

The first very important task confronting everyone is choosing which classes to attend. Between breakfast ending at 9:30 am and 6:30 pm dinner are two morning and three afternoon 75 minute time slots for something like 40 dance, instrument, singing, kid's activities, and craft subjects! My choice (because I didn't know any better) was of all dance classes: Petur Iliev (Bulgarian) and Joe Graziosi (Greek) for the morning slots, and after lunch, a second class with Petur, followed by Milo Destinovski (Macedonian,) and Steve and Susy Kotansky (Albanian and Macedonian). By day two, however, I was already skipping parts of the 4th and 5th slots in dogged but futile efforts to get a sound, ANY sound, out of a hastily borrowed Kaval.

When you register for Balkan Week you are encouraged to request the loan of any of the Balkan musical instruments, and quite likely one will be found for you to try. Most campers do this. Most campers attend some of the various ethnic singing sessions. Many campers skip all the dance classes in favor of these other rare opportunities, and save their energy for dancing at night. This year a real Bulgarian dance band was the evening party headliner. Quite a heady experience with 300 or so on the dance floor! And for your browsing and shopping pleasure, about a third of the spacious hall is set up with vendor displays of ethnic and dance related merchandise, plus a makeshift bar offering wine by the glass, slivovitz, and exotic chocolate.

Since Dance Hall action winds down around 11 pm, if you're not ready to call it a night, you head for the Kafana, a short walk through the woods away. The building you enter is far from fancy, but you can sit at a table, buy a drink from the bar or a snack from the grill, and listen or dance to the music being made. All Kafana entertainment is by campers, singly or in groups, who have auditioned for an onstage slot. The one person with absolute say over auditions and everything else at the Kafana, both east and west versions, happens to be ex-Floridian, Laine Harris, who some of us remember from decades ago.

On Friday evening, most of the classes performed, sometimes in ensembles, to show off their accomplishments. The practice here is that children three years old may attend class if accompanied by an adult. Those four and up may participate on their own. Older kids, teens, and above are encouraged to look out for and mentor the little ones. The youth ensemble was amazing! Every single one of the youngest performers even had a small solo part! For one five- or six-year old it was the drum finale! Even more incredible is the woman who has been inspiring these young musicians every year at Balkan Week!



# Richmond Folk Fest by Terry Abrahams

I hadn't seen Jodi, my travel buddy, since we stopped going on trips together, and this Richmond Folk Fest seemed just the thing to bring us together. This is the 15th Folk Fest presented in Richmond, and it grows every year. There were over 200,000 in attendance this year (1500 volunteers), but we had no trouble getting there, as there is a shuttle bus running every 20 minutes, so helpful. There is no charge to get into this festival, as it is supported by a variety of companies. However, they also have volunteers walking around with big orange buckets and when one makes a drop into the bucket, you receive a sticker for each stage and for each day. And in this new technical age, one can also text a donation. It was fun collecting the stickers.



Different groups are invited every year- but always the best. There were four adult stages (a fifth for children), so there is always a choice. Groups

perform more than once, so one can make a schedule and manage to see about everything one wants to see. Forty groups performed in the three days. Jodi and I stuck with other countries (surprise) as opposed to American Folk music, but we did start off Friday night with a huge Steel Orchestra from New York made up of young people. We also worked in a gospel shout band. Other American music included Bluegrass, Appalachian, Delta Blue (Super Chikan for those of you who know him), Go-go, Hip-hop, African Cuban, Country, Appalachian, Memphis, Soul, Cajun, and Texas Honky-tonk, as well as Native Pride Dancing. Bombino, a guitarist from Niger, called the "sultan of Shred," was also a favorite of the crowd – we couldn't see him, big crowd, but listened for awhile. We mostly stuck to "our" stuff: the Aleppo Ensemble, playing Syrian music which included Whirling Dervish dancing, the Huun Huur Tu doing Tuvan throat singing (so interesting), Greek music from Epirus, Irish (Kevin Doyle and friends), Julie Fowlis singing Scottish songs, and our favorite – we saw them twice, was



the Iberi Choir from Georgia. It was 6 men in costume (New word – not costume - regalia), one guy who did a tiny amount of dancing, singing that was unbelievably good. To top it off, they were also very easy to look at! Wait – there's more! We also attended two

*Georgian Singers*

"workshops" – one string, one drums. People from each

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*String Workshop*



## Richmond Folk Fest (continued)

**Continued from Page 8** country, answered questions about their country and their instrument, ending each with a jam –all together. Educational and fun! I would have liked a little more dancing, but you can't have everything.

There was also food from many countries, as well

*Dervish getting ready to spin, then spinning!*



as the usual carnival food, and a craft area, where we, of course, had to buy some “stuff.” The weather was perfect, minus some rain at the end, and all in all was a wonderful experience. Since I have had to stop traveling, this was almost like being in another country, and quite fulfilling.



*One of the stages.*

## Winter Waites: A Christmas Concert

*Sunday December 15, 2:30, Shoestring Theatre Lake Helen near DeLand*

*For tickets: [Shoestringtheatre.net](http://Shoestringtheatre.net) \$15 each*

Folk dance friends, come enjoy this enthusiastic ensemble of musicians who passionately love to sing and play the music of the Renaissance and Baroque. Fair Lady Kelly Elisabeth Fagan, Master Craig Thomas, Lady Cecilia Catron and recorder Master Roger Werner will enchant you.

The unique, seasonal concert will present an elegant musical banquet including seldom-heard ensemble pieces from the 12th – 20th centuries. Period settings of Christmas hymns, motets, love songs and more from the USA, England, and Western Europe will be sung in original languages and accompanied by a variety of instruments.

Let the charming music entice you into a world of Christmases - and of life - long ago.



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# FootNotes

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## Dancing Past 60: ‘I Actually Forget That I Am Aging’

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/01/arts/dance/old-age-dance-community.html>

*New York Times - Use link above to access more photos and videos related to this story.*

*By Gia Kourlas; Photographs and Video by An Rong Xu*

At the Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York center in Flushing, Queens, men comb through newspapers and sip coffee at long cafeteria tables under fluorescent lights. Normally Swedish pop wouldn't fit in such a scene, but there it is — the sound of Abba in the distance. Follow it. Behind a partition are women, bedecked in sequins, gliding across a checkered floor to “Dancing Queen.”

This is the KCS Senior Dance Team, a group made up of spry and glamorous women in their 60s, 70s and 80s. They can dance, they can jive and, yes, they are having the time of their lives.

“We use famous music because then everyone knows and it's easy to feel it,” Kyung Ok Lee, who bashfully referred to herself as the group's leader, said. “We have some Korean traditional music, American music and K-pop. The music is healing.”

And so is the dancing. Their numbers are heavy on footwork, and the steps, while basic, are knitted together with precision. At first, for the dancer Cha Kyung Yoon, 79, the memorization was demanding. “Thank God for the smartphone,” she said, speaking, like some of the other dancers, with the help of an interpreter. “I practice at my home. While I am dancing, I am very focused. I listen to the music and the lyrics. I also think about my movement: How can I dance beautifully? I actually forget that I am aging.”

The dance team, which began around 30 years ago, rehearses twice a week. Over the past few months, they have been preparing for the organization's gala on Nov. 8 at Ziegfeld Ballroom in Manhattan. Their performance will feature several numbers including the debut of “Gloria,” set to the 1982 Laura Branigan song.

They start off in two horizontal rows, crossing a foot in front of the other while their arms swoop down from side to side. Their hips twist; cha-cha-cha steps pivot them forward and back. They swim through the air, and later they spin, raising their arms high, and stopping with an emphatic clap. There are no pauses. At the end, they shout, “Gloria!” And then they usually giggle.

Myung Hwa Chung, who is 78 and is usually seen presiding in the front of the dancers in rehearsals — she demonstrates or watches, arms crossed, from the front with elegant posture and an exacting eye — is one of the group's choreographers. She designed the ruffled costumes for “Gloria,” silver tops and bottoms that make them look like glamorous action figures preparing to embark on a three-month tour of outer space. The pants are essential.

“This woman, Gloria, is deciding what she wants to do when she wants,” she said. “The dance has a bit more action and a bit more strength. Because the movements are so strong, they can't wear skirts. The clothes and the dance have to match. I wanted to make it modern, as well as very fancy.”

Sometimes, during rehearsals, they incorporate costume changes for different numbers, like layering long, silk fuchsia skirts over their black pants and tops for a lush rendition of “Edelweiss,” swirling the fabric

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## Dancing Past 60: ‘I Actually Forget That I Am Aging’ (continued)

Continued from Page 10 dramatically as they sweep across the floor. They trade the silk for long black transparent skirts with glittering polka-dots in red or silver for “Dancing Queen.” And “New York New York” features a hot pink sash, hats and, of course, a kick line.

But they can take their dancing to a brazen place, too. In one number, set to a Korean pop song, a lyric goes, “So what about my age? It’s the perfect age to love.” They swat the sides of their hips with a twinkle in their eyes.

For “Gloria,” they have decided to incorporate ponytail extensions. Suddenly they look less like grandmothers and more like daughters-in-law.

As a teenager in South Korea, Ms. Chung trained in ballet, even dancing on point but never professionally. Now, she scours YouTube for choreography ideas. She might “see something that our knees can handle,” Ms. Chung said. “I’ll think, that looks good. I listen to the music and I practice on my own. I study gestures and movements a lot. I also have to keep in mind the condition of the dancers, because they are a bit older so they can’t do anything too crazy like spinning around a bunch. Otherwise they’ll get dizzy.”

Of course, age creates physical limitations. But there is artistry in their dancing and musicality, in the way they hang a fraction behind the beat to create the lilting sensation of floating. It’s soulful. By the end of their sessions, which do involve breaks — cookies and coffee are essential for recharging the body — they seem to transform into lighter, younger versions of themselves.

You wouldn’t know that Susan Lee, a graceful wisp of an 84-year-old, has had two knee replacements, wears a pacemaker and is diabetic, which affects the vision in her left eye. Even when walking hurts, she said, “Dancing helps me feel better.”

But she dances for something other than endorphins. “I am very happy when I dance, but I also do it out of a spirit of prayer,” Ms. Lee said. “So even with my knees, I’m thankful that I can still dance. Other people are in walkers. Dancing is giving thanks to God.”



# Dancing Benefits Brain Function Teamwork and Health, According to a Neuroscience Ph.D.

<https://www.inc.com/minda-zetlin/dancing-dance-benefits-brain-function-teamwork-health-peter-lovatt-phd.html>

*Inc. Magazine - Published on October 23, 2019*

*By Minda Zetlin*

What's a quick, easy way to improve your mood, productivity, brain function, and physical health? Take a five-minute dance break. If you do it with your team, you'll not only improve their brain function, mood and health, you'll improve their teamwork as well. That's the finding from years of research by dance psychologist and TEDx speaker Peter Lovatt, Ph.D. I caught up with Lovatt earlier this year at the Qualtrics Summit, where he took the huge audience through a few dance moves that are shown to improve cognition and problem-solving.

Lovatt pioneered the field of dance psychology after a personal revelation. As a school child in the 1970s, he had trouble learning to read by the traditional teaching method--which was the only method available at the time. "As a consequence, I went through school failing over and over again," he says. "I failed all my written exams and I wasn't submitted to take an exam in some subjects, such as history and geography, because I was deemed too stupid to succeed in those subjects. I left school as a certified failure."

Along the way, Lovatt had discovered a love of dance, and so he became a professional dancer, working in musical theater and in a dance troupe. One day, it dawned on him that he was capable of memorizing two hours' worth of complex dance moves, whereas musicians in the show had to work from a score and even the actors might forget a line and need prompting. "And I thought, 'Gosh, I can't be stupid if I'm capable of learning that amount of content.'"

Armed with this new viewpoint, Lovatt taught himself to read in his early 20s, and went on to become a senior research fellow on the English faculty at Cambridge University, and then earn a Masters and Ph.D. in neural computation. He created the dance psychology lab at the University of Hertfordshire in the UK and ran it for 15 years, conducting hundreds of experiments in how dance affects people's brains, bodies, and moods. He learned that dance is an inborn, fundamental human activity, something our ancestors did even before they had invented spoken language. It's also something even pre-verbal children will do by instinct.

And, he says, dance is a fantastic thing to do in the workplace because it benefits you and your employees in four different ways:

## 1. Cognitive

In experiments, subjects were given two problem-solving tasks with a break in between, during which some of them danced and others didn't. Those who danced performed better on the second set of tests.

Not only that, Lovatt says, but different types of dancing improve different types of cognition. For convergent problem-solving, in which you have to arrive at a single right answer (multiplying 43 by 9, for example), learning specific dance steps or movements will help the most, Lovatt's research shows. For divergent problem-solving in which there could be multiple right answers (how to increase sales, for example) improvisational dancing or movement brings the most benefit.

## 2. Mood

Dancing has an immediate and positive effect on mood that can be measured through hormonal changes and reduction in inflammatory markers, Lovatt says. And while inflammation is useful as the body's response

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# Dancing Benefits Brain Function Teamwork and Health, According to a Neuroscience Ph.D.

## (Continued)

Continued from Page 12 to an injury or trauma, in an otherwise healthy person, inflammation is associated with many serious illnesses, such as cancer and heart disease. "It changes those inflammation markers when you make people happier," he says.

That helps cognition as well. "When people are in a better emotional state, it improves their problem-solving ability," he notes.

### 3. Social

There's good reason why people in every culture and in every part of the world have gathered to dance in groups throughout human history, Lovatt says. "There are fantastic studies of young children when you bounce babies in time with other people. When you move together rhythmically, you increase levels of pro-social behavior. They become more cooperative and they bond together. They've shown it in adults as well." Indeed, in one study of cardiovascular patients, a group who participated in a 12-week Greek dance program showed better results than a group of similar patients who spent 12 weeks going to the gym.

For work teams, moving together in rhythm has a similar effect. "That's fantastic because if we're trying to solve a problem together, we need to find a rhythm in the workplace and bond together," he says.

### 4. Physical

It's well known that for knowledge workers who sit at desks or computers all day, taking occasional breaks for physical activity of any kind will enhance well-being and health. Lovatt says it will improve cognition as well. "When people are sitting for hours, they stop processing information so well," he says. "For screen-based office workers, that's not great."

People may move around the office in the course of doing their jobs, he notes. "Often, those are very functional movements, but to get the benefits we need to do something other than functional movements. So if you're walking to the photocopier, why not do a little step-ball-change on the way?"

Of course, this last suggestion points up a potential issue with dancing in the workplace--the embarrassment factor. Whether this is a problem or not depends entirely on an organization's culture. Lovatt says some workplaces have regular Wednesday afternoon dance parties, while at others, dancing of any kind is unacceptable. For the latter group, Lovatt often gets around these objections by calling what he teaches "movement" rather than "dance," or by coming at it in a different way.

For example, working with 12-year-old boys who would rather be tortured than have to dance, Lovatt instituted imaginary fencing, in which each boy pretended to hold a foil, and they moved backward and forward together as each advanced or retreated in a pretend battle. "It's improvised and shared movement, but it's not dancing," he explains. In a law firm where the attorneys refused to dance, he simply had them walk from one end of the room to the other and back again. By the third time, he said, they were walking in step, improvising movement together, though not dancing. Likewise, he recommends a simple exercise called "stand, shake, sync, and smile," in which you stand up, shake your body, synchronize your movements either to music or to other people, and then, well, smile. All these things are beneficial because they unleash some of the same benefits that dancing does.

"It's very easy to ridicule dancing as something meant for only one part of society," he says. "You ask men why they don't dance, and they'll say, 'I'm not gay,' or that they're not part of some ethnic group." But that's all wrong, he says. "We are literally all born to dance."

# Calendar, Events, and Tours

Look for more information on events, tours, and cruises on the FFDC website calendar: [www.folkdance.org](http://www.folkdance.org)

## Calendar

- 11/13/2019:** Durham/Chapel Hill International Folk Dance Club 55th Year, Carrboro , NC, [www.trianglefolk dancers.org/events.html](http://www.trianglefolk dancers.org/events.html)
- 11/15/2019:** Fall Camp, Brandeis, CA, <http://www.socalfolkdance.org/calendar.htm>, Folk Dance Federation of California, South
- 11/28/2019:** Texas Folk Dance Camp, Bruceville, TX, [www.tifd.org/](http://www.tifd.org/), Texas International Folk Dancers
- 11/28/2019:** Bannerman Folk Camp, Black Mountain, NC, [www.bannermanfolkcamp.com](http://www.bannermanfolkcamp.com)
- 11/28/2019:** Thanksgiving Family Camp, Swannanoa, NC, [www.familydancecamp.com](http://www.familydancecamp.com)
- 11/29/2019:** Annual Kolo Festival, San Francisco, CA, [balkantunes.org/kolofestival](http://balkantunes.org/kolofestival)
- 12/18/2019:** Orlando Holiday Party, Orlando, FL, No web information, Orlando IFDC
- 12/26/2019:** Christmas Country Dance School, Berea, KY, <http://www.berea.edu/ccds>
- 12/26/2019:** Winter Dance Week, Brasstown, NC, [www.folkschool.org/](http://www.folkschool.org/), John C. Campbell Folk School
- 12/28/2019:** Folklore Village Festival of Christmas and Midwinter Traditions, Dodgeville, WI, [folklorevillage.org](http://folklorevillage.org)
- 12/28/2019:** Machol Miami Lite, Aventura, FL, [www.macholmiami.com](http://www.macholmiami.com)
- 01/01/2020:** Folk Dancing New Years Day Party, Orlando, FL, No web information, Bobby Quibodeaux and Pat Henderson
- 01/17/2020:** Orange Blossom Ball, South Daytona, FL, [orangeblossomcontra.com](http://orangeblossomcontra.com)
- 01/24/2020:** Florida Snow Ball, Gulfport, FL, <http://www.floridasnowball.com/>, Tampa Friends of Old-Time Dance
- 01/24/2020:** Folk Ball Festival, Madison, WI, <http://www.madfolkdance.org/folkball>, Madison Folk Dance Club
- 01/31/2020:** FFDC Florida Winter Folk Dance Workshop, Kissimmee, FL, [www.folkdance.org/](http://www.folkdance.org/), Florida Folk Dance Council, Inc.
- 02/14/2020:** Dance Flurry, Saratoga Springs, NY, [www.flurryfestival.org/](http://www.flurryfestival.org/)
- 02/21/2020:** Greek Festival, Ft. Myers, FL, [greekfestfortmyers.com/](http://greekfestfortmyers.com/), Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church
- 02/21/2020:** Greek Festival, Melbourne, FL, [http://www.saint-katherine.org/fest\\_info.html](http://www.saint-katherine.org/fest_info.html) , St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church
- 02/21/2020:** Greek Festival, St. Petersburg, FL, <http://www.supergreekfest.net/>,
- 02/28/2020:** Ocala Greek Festival, Belleview, FL, [greekfestivalocala.com/](http://greekfestivalocala.com/), St. Mark Greek Orthodox Church
- 03/01/2020:** Tamburitzans Show, Sarasota, FL, <http://www.thetamburitzans.org/>
- 03/03/2020:** Tamburitzans Show, Avon Park, FL, <http://thetamburitzans.org/>
- 03/05/2020:** NFO Annual Conference, Laguna Woods, CA, [www.nfo-usa.org/](http://www.nfo-usa.org/), National Folk Organization (NFO)
- 03/05/2020:** Tamburitzans Show, Aventura, FL, <http://thetamburitzans.org/>
- 03/06/2020:** Tamburitzans Show, Orlando, FL, <http://thetamburitzans.org/>
- 03/06/2020:** 50th Laguna Folk Dance Festival, Laguna Woods, CA, [www.lagunainternationaldancers.com/](http://www.lagunainternationaldancers.com/)
- 03/07/2020:** Boston Playford Ball, Framingham, MA, <http://www.cds-boston.org/>, Boston Country Dance Society
- 03/08/2020:** Tamburitzans Show, Tarpon Springs, FL, <http://thetamburitzans.org/>
- 03/27/2020:** Cajun Music and Dance Weekend, Dodgeville, WI, <http://www.folklorevillage.org/>,
- 04/03/2020:** Spring Scandinavian Weekend, Dodgeville, WI, <http://folklorevillage.org/>, Folklore Village
- 04/04/2020:** Scanfest, Thousand Oaks, CA, No web information
- 04/23/2020:** Kochavim Israeli Dance Camp, Wimberly, TX, [www.kochavim.net/](http://www.kochavim.net/)
- 05/01/2020:** English Country Dance Weekend, Dodgeville, WI, <http://www.folklorevillage.org/> ,
- 05/08/2020:** International Folk Dance Camp, Hopewell Junction, NY, <http://ifc-ny.com/IFC.flier.pdf>,
- 05/08/2020:** Redbud Romp: Folk Dance workshop with Daniela Ivanova-Nyberg, Knoxville, TN, <http://www.oakridgefolk dancers.org/>, Oak Ridge Folk Dancers

# Calendar (continued)

**06/25/2020:** Folk Dance and Music Weekend and Folk Days, Plymouth, MA, <http://www.facone.org/pinewoods/pinewoods.html>, Folk Arts Center of New England

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## Folk Dance Tours

For Dance on the Water Folk Tours, see <http://folkdanceonthewater.org> or contact David and Marija Hillis at [folkdanceonthewater@gmail.com](mailto:folkdanceonthewater@gmail.com) or 510-459-0092.

For Seminars of Greek Dance with Kyriakos Moisisdis, see <http://www.moisisdis-dance.gr/en/> or contact [moisisdiskyriakos@gmail.com](mailto:moisisdiskyriakos@gmail.com).

For tours with Sonia and Cristian, see <http://www.soniacristian.net> or contact Sonia at [sonia\\_dion@hotmail.com](mailto:sonia_dion@hotmail.com).

For Jim Gold Folk Tours, see <http://www.jimgold.com> or contact Jim Gold at [jimgold@jimgold.com](mailto:jimgold@jimgold.com) or 201-836-0362.

For tours with Zeljko Jergen, contact Fusae Senzaki Carroll at [fusaec@aol.com](mailto:fusaec@aol.com) or 916-798-4675

For tours with Tineke van Geel (sometimes assisted by Maurits), contact them at <http://www.tinekevangeel.nl>.

For the Macedonian and Bulgarian Folk Tour, please contact Vlasto at [sunstagecompany@gmail.com](mailto:sunstagecompany@gmail.com) or visit <https://sunstagecompany.wixsite.com/arts>

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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