



President's Message by Gary Berke

Dear dancers,

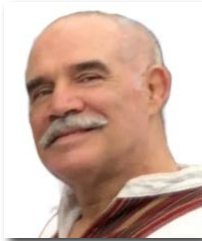
Happy summer! All arrangements have been long secured for our weekend workshop on February 5th-8th in response to requests to avoid clashing with other events. The relationships with the hotel and floor company are solid; good for as long as we need them. In response to our increasing age and decreasing energy, there is talk about hiring only one teacher for workshops in the future, which will be brought up for discussion at the general meeting. Think about this.

I reluctantly returned from a trip to France, which I took with Carla. We had an amazing time in spite of cold, rainy weather for our first six days with her brother in the center of France, and a heatwave for the last nine days in Paris. We stayed in a modest, but attractive space in Paris; booked only two tours—Versailles and a Seine cruise; and mostly wandered around. About every fifteen minutes, we had a pleasant surprise: e.g. a little green hideaway with a couple of workout machines at the bottom and a flower covered recycling bin at the entrance. And the food!!! Where we stayed, in the 20th Arondissment, wasn't even on the Fromer guide map, but wherever we went in that wonderful city, we met with friendliness and the best vibes. No accident that the letters in the word PARIS comprise five eighths of the word paradise.

FFDC's next event will be the summer Independence Day party at Ruthann's resort in Deland. Equally wonderful, guaranteed, will be the Summer Fling in Gainesville in August at a new location.

This is definitely my last term as president. Please think of running. I have set up good systems and relationships which you just need to maintain, and if we agree on hiring only one teacher, even that process will be simplified. Thanks as always to our board, but new perspectives can brighten our future.

Gary



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FFDC HELP STILL WANTED!



Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes the membership to run the FFDC. This section, "Help Wanted," will include one-off tasks that someone could step up and assist the Board with them. Some could be one-time, others associated just with Camp (for example, someone could have assisted Gary in finding a dance floor for future years - a one and done action), and others could be on a more regular basis. Monthly, bi-monthly, or as needed.

Please contact Gary if you are interested in helping the team.

- (1) FFDC still needs a Historian. Responsibilities would be "digitizing" old copies of the newsletter, Camp historical records (e.g. dances taught), and other key documents donated to FFDC. The goal is to have them electronically stored. So someone with a printer who can scan the documents is needed. The electronic versions will then be stored on the website by John.

Need is on-going, but there is not set schedule as this is a continuous activity.



Note: Early Date for Next Newsletter Submissions!

Message From The Editor...

All articles for the September-October 2026 issue must be submitted by Sunday, August 23.

Yes, this is earlier than usual - but the Newsletter Editor (me!) is getting on an airplane to Sicily shortly thereafter so I will need any articles no later than the 23rd. I greatly appreciate your cooperation.

Please send articles for insertion to newsletter@floridafolkdancer.org email address. Thank you

Club Reports In

Orlando International Folk Dance Club by Pat Henderson



Our club survived turning 55 and Bobby and I spent our 50th anniversary in Maui. It was a wonderful and relaxing trip and we saw parts of Maui and the Big Island that we had not seen before. Fortunately, Carla, Manuel, and Cathy ran folk dance the week we were gone.

We had a good spring turnout with 21 dancers on June 10. Cathy had her daughter and two granddaughters there. We enjoyed them dancing with us and it was Cathy's last night before she left for Arizona for the summer. Then the next week, we had more men than women. 6-5! This is because Yossi and John both came for the first time on May 29. John came to our dance party on the beach on April 17 so you may remember him. He joined in Florica since he had folk danced before. Then, Yossi had been visiting his daughter and coming to Israeli dancing for years. Eva, Bobby, and I danced with him there and we were delighted to find out that he had moved to Orlando. He did both Israeli and Balkan in Israel from childhood. Welcome to both Yossi and John!

Those traveling the past two months include Carla visiting her brother in France and Gary went with her.

They had a great time seeing the sights including Paris. Kelly to Colorado to visit friends and family. She visited my daughter, Julie and her boyfriend, Bob, who live up the mountain from Boulder. Eva also went to Colorado to visit friends. Susan went to Nebraska for the graduation from high school of a close friend's grandson. Debbie went to Buffalo to visit friends and family. Nicki went to Philadelphia for historical tours. One of our newest members, John, went on an Alaskan cruise. Finally, Bobby and I went to Tallahassee for Rich and Cathy's (Davis) 50th wedding anniversary party. Cathy's mother is Mickey Cross, who danced in Orlando and was once a President of FFDC. She is still alive at 97. Then we went to Williamsburg, Virginia for a very historical trip in a very historical year. I'll write an article for the next issue of the newsletter.

I am happy to announce that Joe Davis and Danielle Mor were married on June 14 in Apopka at a venue on a lake. Bobby, Kelly, and I were in attendance. I am also happy to announce that Karen Green, who was married to David Digby, has moved back to Orlando. She hopes to come dance with us soon.



Events

Orlando Group Participates In Global Folk Dance Party by Pat Henderson

Once again, OIFDC was a guest leader at the Global Folk Dance Party on June 20. The theme was weddings and engagements - perfect, right? So Bobby and I did Dodi Li since that was the dance that ended our wedding ceremony. We were at Leu Gardens here in Orlando on April 24, 1976. Yossi

and Carla also danced it with us. We wore our new OIFDC 55 shirts so we looked very different from wearing different FFDC shirts when we danced in January to promote our Florida workshop. The other dances were: Ach Eleni, Ceresna, Hava Nagila, Svatba, Kostursko, W Moim Ogrodecku, and Syrtos.



Screen shot from on-line video, so quality is a bit fuzzy.

2026 Summer Fling - Save The Date



2027 Winter Workshop - Save The Date



Footnotes

A Rewarding Visit to Arizona by Joyce Story



A trip in May-June to Arizona, where I lived for 30 years before returning to my native state of Florida, was fulfilling in many ways. For example, there was the opportunity to participate in “Authors’ Day” at a Phoenix park and tell several stories from my collection *Tales of the Sonoran Desert*. This book was on display along with my translation of Daniel Mato’s book on storytelling (*How to Tell Stories: a Latin American Perspective*). I also delighted in connecting with fellow members of the “West Side Story Tellers” (please appreciate our extraordinarily clever name), with former colleagues from the college where I taught, with family (one lone cousin), and with many friends and neighbors from throughout the immense Phoenix metropolitan area.

Of course, I reconnected with the folk dancers. In Tucson, a meeting of the Shala Folk Dance Club led to heartwarming reunions, though unfortunately I missed seeing the leader of this group, Andrew

Carnie of Folkdance Musings fame (the invaluable resource found at folkdancemusings.blogspot.com). Andrew was recovering from surgery, under the care of his incredible kitties. Incidentally, Andrew will soon publish a folkdance textbook, *Folk Dances of Europe and the Middle East*. In Phoenix I rejoined my former group, the Phoenix International Folk Dancers (PIFD). They have added many dances to their repertoire that I’m not familiar with, but they still do ones I know, including the close to impossible “Alunelul de la bailesti” from Romania. PIFD is a vital, growing group, and I was pleased to see the numerous young, excellent dancers in attendance.

I returned to Gainesville in time to make it to GIFD’s Wednesday night session. It was good to be home! GIFD continues draw a nice crowd for our weekly sessions and to regularly offer performances for the community.



With friends at Authors’ Day in the North Mountain Visitors’ Center, Phoenix, AZ.

A Rewarding Visit to Arizona (Continued)

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Andrew Carnie and his nurses, following surgery.



Just a few of the PIFD dancers who date back to my time. Some of you may recognize Margy, who has joined Florida dancers more than once, on the far left.

Upon landing at the Gainesville airport, I hurried to the GIFD gathering.



Julieta, June, Gary, Lilia, and Joyce at one of the adult day care centers where we danced in June.

Armenia Folk Dance Tour by Sarah Sheard and Rob McCollum



We recently took a 2-week folk dance tour of Armenia with Tineke and Maurits van Geel. It was a great trip both for dancing and sightseeing. The trip started and ended in Yerevan, the new capital of the country (since 1922). Well laid out and easy to get around from our centrally located modern hotel, the Ani Grand. We saw many sights in the city itself (Republic Square, The Cascades, open market) and a short bus ride to Echmiadzin, the main cathedral and spiritual home of the Armenian Church. An unexpected treat was during the visit to the Zvartnots Ruins (an ancient cathedral site) we danced with a group of teenagers on a school trip. We enjoyed a traditional Armenian dinner near the city center (Republic Square) with live music and dancing led by Tineke. Our first dance classes with a local, lively teacher occurred in the hotel. Mery Levonyan is a young, enthusiastic teacher leading a dance group, who taught us several authentic dances from around the country. Several of us hope to bring her to the US for workshops.

night) but a beautiful area. On the way we visited Areni Cave which has the oldest known winery where an archeologist had found a 5,500 year old leather shoe in good condition; and a 13th century monastery, Norovank (there are narrow steps up to the second floor on the outside of the monastery that had to be closed because visitors kept falling off them). Tineke gave one of her two dance classes at LucyTours. About a dozen of us made the difficult hike to Smbataberd Fortress ruins, which has a commanding view of the valley and was important during the silk road period. An afternoon in the small village of Aghavnadzor gave us a chance to visit an arts school, see their projects, and dance with them. An unexpected surprise was dinner at the dance teacher's home, where his wife prepared all the food. They make their own vlach (traditional flatbread) in an earthen oven and collect from the forest many herbs and vegetables which we also enjoyed. It was a delicious meal!



The Cascades, Yerevan

After a few days recuperating from jet lag in Yerevan, we left for Hermon Village to stay in a country resort, LucyTours. It was a little chilly there (down to 35°F at



The Norovank Monastery

On the route to the spa town Dilijan, near Armenia's huge Lake Sevan, we visited Noratus, which is one of the oldest cross-stone cemeteries. Cross-stones (Khachtars) are the typical Armenian headstones, a uniquely Armenian art form. Later in the tour, we met

Armenia Folk Dance Tour (Continued)

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an 83-year-old stone mason still making them. After Dilijan, we lunched at the home of a family from a Russian minority. Many Molokans, who were persecuted in Russia in the 19th century because their version of Christianity did not conform to the Russian Orthodox Church, had moved to Armenia and established communities. Although in general they shun outsiders, our particular family had been open to Tineke's visitors for a few years and their neighbors have gotten used to it. Their borscht was delicious!

Gyumri came next and is Armenia's cultural capital. It has some beautiful architecture (including, of course, churches) even though it was heavily damaged during a huge 1988 earthquake and is still being rebuilt. Perhaps ironically, most of the damage was done to the Soviet-era built buildings and not to the

older buildings. We enjoyed a special lunch in town and danced with the local folk dance group. Rob particularly enjoyed the city's central park which had many sculptures and was perfect for bird watching.

After returning to Yerevan, we had our last class with Mery, and spent an afternoon visiting Talin, where many of the refugees from western Armenia settled after the events of 1915. They provided us lunch, played traditional instruments, and danced with us. The following day was free, followed by our farewell dinner. Ours was a multi-faceted tour and we did have several non-dancers who enjoyed getting to know this small (3 million people) country. It also did not involve long bus trips! Tineke aims to have this tour every year, even as she and Maurits are slowing down with teaching. We definitely feel that we have left a piece of our hearts in Armenia.



Our tour group with the local folk dancers in Gyumri.

Calendar and Tours

Look for more information on events, tours,
and cruises on the FFDC website calendar:
www.floridafolkdancer.org

Event Calendar

- 2026-07-04 - **Nordic Fiddles and Feet**, Moultonborough, NH, www.nordicfiddlesandfeet.org
- 2026-07-05 - **4th of July Fling**, Deland, FL, No Web Information, FFDC
- 2026-07-09 - **Door County Folk Festival**, Sturgeon Bay, WI, www.dcff.net
- 2026-07-10 - **Montana Folk Festival**, Butte, MT, www.montanafolkfestival.com
- 2026-07-12 - **KDI Dance Camp**, Murray, KY, www.knobtiger.com
- 2026-07-16 - **New Mexico Camp**, Montezuma, NM, www.swifdi.org, Southwest International Folk Dance Institute
- 2026-07-19 - **Stockton Folk Dance Camp - Week 1**, Stockton, CA, www.stocktonfolkdancecamp.org
- 2026-07-26 - **Stockton Folk Dance Camp - Week 2**, Stockton, CA, www.stocktonfolkdancecamp.org
- 2026-07-29 - **World Folkfest**, Springville, UT, www.worldfolkfest.org
- 2026-07-31 - **Lark Camp**, Woodlands, CA, www.larkcamp.com
- 2026-08-02 - **Ti Ti Tabor Hungarian Folk Camp**, Gig Harbor, WA, www.tititabor.org
- 2026-08-08 - **East Coast Balkan Music and Dance Workshop**, Rock Hill, NY, www.eefc.org/balkan-camp/east-coast-balkan-music-dance-workshop, East European Folklife Center
- 2026-08-08 - **FFDC Summer Fling**, Micanopy, FL, www.floridafolkdancer.org, FFDC
- 2026-08-16 - **Mainewoods Dance Camp Week 1**, Fryeburg, ME, www.mainewoodsdancecamp.org
- 2026-08-23 - **Mainewoods Dance Camp Week 2**, Fryeburg, ME, www.mainewoodsdancecamp.org
- 2026-09-04 - **Balkanalia**, Corbett, OR, www.balkanalia.org, Balkan Festival Northwest
- 2026-09-04 - **Karmiel USA** - Israeli Folk Dance Weekend, Charlotte, NC, www.karmielusa.com
- 2026-09-04 - **Labor Day Weekend at Pinewoods**, Plymouth, MA, www.facone.org/labor-day-weekend/labor-day-weekend.html
- 2026-09-10 - **Tamburitza Extravaganza**, St. Louis, MO, www.tamburitza.org, Tamburitza Association of America
- 2026-09-11 - **Space Coast Scottish Country Dancers Annual Fling**, Melbourne, FL, No web information
- 2026-09-18 - **Enon Valley Folk Dance Camp**, Enon Valley, PA, www.folkdancepittsburgh.com
- 2026-09-18 - **Fandango Dance Weekend**, Decatur, GA, www.ecdatlanta.org, English Country Dance Atlanta
- 2026-09-24 - **World Camp**, Rock Hill, NY, www.worldcamp.us, World Music & Dance Institute
- 2026-09-25 - **Mountain Playshop**, Montreat, NC, www.mountainplayshop.org
- 2026-10-02 - **Ellen Golann Folk Dance Weekend**, Hopewell Junction, NY, www.tinyurl.com/Golannweekend
- 2026-10-08 - **Fall Dance Weekend**, Brasstown, NC, www.folkschool.org, John C. Campbell Folk School
- 2026-10-09 - **Texas Camp**, Bruceville, TX, www.tifd.org, Texas International Folk Dancers
- 2026-10-09 - **Oktoberfest International Dance and Music Weekend**, Marlboro, VT, www.facone.org/oktoberfest/oktoberfest.html, Folk Art Center of New England
- 2026-10-10 - **Greek Festival**, St. Augustine, FL, www.holytrinitystaugustine.org/events, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
- 2026-10-23 - **Clearwater Greek Fest**, Clearwater, FL, www.clearwatergreekfest.com
- 2026-10-23 - **Fall Swedish Music and Dance Weekend**, Dodgeville, WI, www.folklorevillage.org
- 2026-10-22 - **Pourparler**, Jefferson, MD, www.nfo-usa.org/pourparler, NFO
- 2026-10-30 - **Fall Camp**, Brandeis, CA, www.fallcamp.org, Folk Dance Federation of California, South
- 2026-11-06 - **Autumn Leaves**, Nashville, TN, www.nifddance.com, Nashville International Folk Dancers
- 2026-11-06 - **Greek Festival**, Maitland, FL, www.orlandogreekfest.com, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
- 2026-11-12 - **Greek Festival**, Daytona Beach, FL, www.greekfestivaldaytonabeach.com, St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church
- 2026-11-13 - **International Dance Workshop**, Minneapolis, MN, www.tapestryfolkdance.org, Tapestry Folkdance

Event Calendar (Continued)

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- 2026-11-13 - **Jax Greek Fest**, Jacksonville, FL, www.jaxgreekfest.com
 2026-11-26 - **Bannerman Folk Camp**, Black Mountain, NC, www.bannermanfolkcamp.com
 2026-11-27 - **Kolo Festival**, San Francisco, CA, www.kolofestival.org
 2026-12-27 - **Winter Dance Week**, Brasstown, NC, www.folkschool.org, John C. Campbell Folk School
 2026-11-28 - **Orlando Multicultural Festival**, Orlando, FL, www.fusionfest.org
 2026-12-28 - **Folklore Village Festival of Christmas and Midwinter Traditions**, Dodgeville, WI, www.folklorevillage.org
 2027-02-05 - **Florida Folk Dance Council Winter Workshop**, Kissimmee, FL, www.floridafolkdancer.org, FFDC

Folk Dance Tour Contacts

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

For Seminars of Greek Dance with Kyriakos Moisidis, contact moisidiskyriakos@gmail.com.

For tours with Sonia and Cristian, see <http://www.soniacristian.net> or contact Sonia at sonia_dion@hotmail.com.

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

For tours with Zeljko Jergen, contact Fusae Senzaki Carroll at 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 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!)

Process For Sending Group Email Blasts to FFDC Membership

Start by creating an email to be sent to:

reqmsg@floridafolkdancer.org

(reqmsg stands for "request message.")

Include in that email these three items:

1. A Subject Line for the email you are asking to be sent.
2. The body text of the email - what you want it to say. We won't be editing your text, so please make sure its clear and will make sense to the recipients.
3. A contact email or phone number - someone the recipient can contact if they want more information about the subject.

Allow at least a **one week processing time** on these distributions, though generally they go out much more quickly than that.

Florida Folk Dancer is published six times a year by the Florida Folk Dance Council, Inc., a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to further knowledge, performance, and recreational enjoyment of International Folk Dance.

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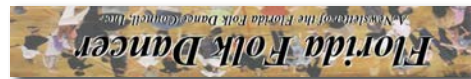
Immediate Past President: Terry Abrahams

Submissions: Send event notices for the calendar to Pat Henderson.

Send all other newsletter submissions to the newsletter@floridafolkdancer.org email address.

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