

Set Consciousness and the Contra Buzz

by Gary Shapiro

What is "consciousness" doing in our newsletter? I propose that *set consciousness* is one of the several factors that contribute to the contra dance experience.

We dance with several people during a dance. During just one time through, we dance with our partner. We dance with our neighbor. We dance with our partner's neighbor. We might dance with the previous neighbor, or the next neighbor, or both, or with our shadow/trail buddy.

Ultimately, we dance with the entire set. Set consciousness means being aware of this fact. And when enough members of a set are set-conscious, the set itself becomes (hang on!) a conscious entity, and certain somewhat mundane phenomena might occur:

- As the set forms, it spaces itself out and orients itself in relation to the other sets and the hall.
- Long lines go forward and back together.
- The set adjusts itself during the dance. When dancing on a non-level surface, such as the Oak Park dance platform, the set uses every opportunity to move itself back to where it started, without the caller having to specifically call figures such as "long lines forward and stretch."
- The individual dancers, while enjoying and expressing themselves, take the needs of the set into account.

So far this might sound like a chore, but the real, not-so-mundane phenomenon is the extraordinary feeling that comes to a group that is
see SETS, next page

Star Gazer

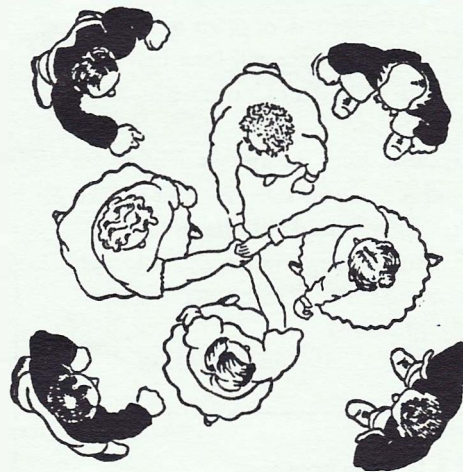
Put a Little Step in Your Spring

As we step towards spring 1995, we approach special SBCDS attractions plus other great events happening soon and on into summer. But first a look back.

The Big Rain on January 9-10 forced us to cancel the January 15 dance. Relief agencies needed the Rec. Center to provide assistance, and we were unable to arrange an alternate site in time. But those of us who made it to the Carpinteria dance on the 14th had a great time.

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

March 19: Erik Hoffman, Andrea Hoag and Daniel Steinberg. We've enjoyed



Andrea's music before as have dancers across the country. Daniel Steinberg plays keyboards, flute, melodica, synths, drums, and feet for the Hillbillies from Mars. Erik will call the dance, and maybe, just maybe, he'll bring out his soprano saxophone to add that extra *je ne sais quoi* to the dance.

April 16: Let's have a potluck before the dance, 5:30-6:30. A dish to share and \$1 admits you.

April 23: Welcome back caller Kathy Anderson, who always infuses the hall with great energy, enthusiasm and skill. Joining her on stage and providing a

Star Gazer's Raison d'Etire

Why do we point out these out-of-town events (bottom of page) issue after issue? Because they're great fun. Because they can get you hooked on contra dance and thereby increase attendance at our dances. Because they can increase your enjoyment and expression of dance. And because if you wait until the last minute you might not get in! (Note that "last minute" can be months before some events.)

similar infusion are our SLO County friends, the **Growling Old Geezers**.

May 7: **Drastic Measures** will treat us to a special reunion performance.

June 18: The **Hillbillies from Mars** will be playing for our Carrillo Ballroom dance following their appearance at the Live Oak Music Festival.

SPRUNG FLOOR DANCE FESTIVAL

May 27: Our Oak Park series returns in conjunction with the sixth annual **Sprung Floor Dance Festival** on Memorial Day weekend. We begin with a potluck picnic at the park at 5:00. Then we spring into action for a dance across the creek (or is it a spring?) at 7:00, intro at 6:30.

May 28: On Sunday we get into the spirit of springs with a 12-hour dance on the Carrillo Ballroom's sprung floor. Plan for contra dancing on the sprung floor, and workshops in side rooms as well as on the sprung floor, from noon to midnight with a break for dinner. Staff, price and exact schedule is still to be determined. Look for flyers at SBCDS and other dances.

OUT OF TOWN & FAR OUT

Find flyers for these events at our dances or call the number indicated.

see STAR GAZER, next page

Star Gazer

from front page

Dance Awakening. This brand-new event takes place amidst the bubbles of Harbin Hot Springs on the weekend of April 7-9. The **Hillbillies from Mars** and the **New Young Buzzards** will coax you from your soaking with their music as will **Mike Richardson** and **Susan Michaels** with their calling. Local dancers **Shaynin Butler** and **Kelli Gray** are producing this event. (805) 649-5189.

KCBX Public Radio's Live Oak Music Festival. Father's Day weekend, June 16-18, Live Oak Campground near Lake Cachuma. Last year they had a discount for early registration. (805) 781-3030.

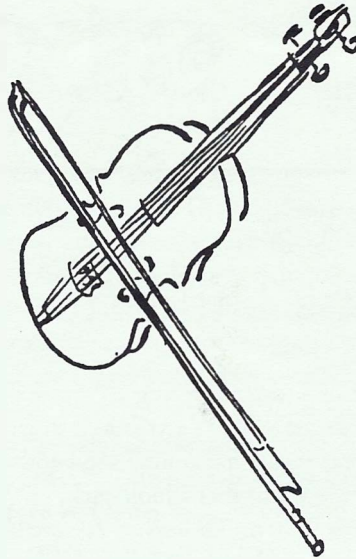
CTMS Summer Solstice Folk Music, Dance and Storytelling Festival. June 23-25 in Calabasas at Soka University. Contra, swing, clogging and international dancing. Staff includes callers **Susan Michaels** and **Ron Buchanan**, and bands from New England and Quebec plus the L-7's. Discounts for advanced registration. (818) 342-7664.

Sierra Swing. June 24-July 1, a week of contra, square and swing dance at the Alta Sierra/Armenian camp near King's Canyon sponsored by the Bay Area Country Dance Society. Callers **Frank Hall** and **Lisa Greenleaf** with music by the **Horseflies** and the **Hillbillies from Mars**. Swing dance music by **Cats 'n Jammers**. The camp now has two dance floors. (415) 864-6911.

Lady of the Lake Summer Music & Dance Week. June 25-July 1 with **Ted Sannella**, **Brad Foster**, **Steve Hickman**, **Bob McQuillen**, **Laurie Andres** and **Cathie Whitesides** at a camp on Coeur d'Alene Lake in northern Idaho, 90 minutes from Spokane, Washington. (509) 838-2160.

BACDS English Dance Week at Mendocino. July 8-15. (415) 878-8785.

Alta Sierra Labor Day Weekend Dance Camp, this year featuring **Wild Asparagus**, at the Alta Sierra/Armenian camp near King's Canyon. September 1-4. Produced by LA caller **Drew Tronvig/Dance Crazy**. (310) 459-7179.



Changes in Carpinteria

After years of dedicated service to the dance community, **Bruce Morden** and **Andrea Adams-Morden** will soon step down as coordinators of the Carpinteria dance series. It is not certain that we will attempt to continue the series; however, it is certain that we can't do so without some new volunteers to coordinate it. If you might be interested, or want to learn more about the job, please call **Jonathan Southard**, Volunteer Coordinator, at (805) 683-4909.

Likewise, with the approach of spring, we will once again start dancing at **Oak Park**, and will need volunteers to help with setup, transportation of equipment, and sign-ins. Please call **Scott Swain**, (805) 893-4893.

SBCDS Board

Sets

from front page

working/playing together with common purpose. (Consider the popularity of "the wave" at sporting events.) I might describe it as a buzz, team spirit, a feeling of community or even a spiritual high.

Our common purpose, I propose, is to facilitate the enjoyment of others in the set and have a good time ourselves. It's amazing how much doing the former promotes the latter.

Your responses and comments are welcome.

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This article is not an official editorial; it is the author's own opinion.

Editorial

You Can, You Will, You Must!

Has it ever crossed your mind to write a letter or an article, or create a drawing or sketch, for the *Dance Star*? We know the answer is "yes" for a good number of readers. Now how many have actually done so? Very few.

For magazines like *Newsweek* or the *New Yorker* this is not a problem. They have paid staffs and paid free-lancers. The sheer volume of readers guarantees that they'll get plenty of letters, even though the vast majority of people who think of writing letters never get around to it.

The *Dance Star*, unfortunately, cannot pay for articles. And our circulation is so small that letters are rare. So we ask that when you think of contributing to keep the above in mind, and also this: if you don't do it, no one else will.

Another tactic is to publish something outrageous to egg people on. Okay, which one of you good-for-nothing lazy worthless bums is going to write it?

Please submit material for the next issue by April 30 or negotiate a deadline with the editor, who is a worse procrastinator than you are.



Spring 1995

Old-Time Contra Dance Calendar

Santa Barbara Country Dance Society • P.O. Box 21904 • Santa Barbara, CA 93121-1904 • (805) 969-1511

Location Key

CB Carrillo Ballroom, 100 East Carrillo St., Santa Barbara. Co-sponsor: SB Adult Programs.
 CARP Main School, corner of 8th and Palm, Carpinteria.
 OP Oak Park Dance Platform, on Junipero at Calle Real, SB.

Come dance on the finest floor in the West at the Carrillo Ballroom, under the stars at Oak Park and at the more intimate Carpinteria setting. Join the fun! Dance to the irresistible rhythms of live old-time string bands. We'll do the flowing contras of New England, colorful square dances, plus a few old-time couple dances such as waltz.
 We hold an **Introductory Workshop** before each dance. Come at 6:30 to learn the basics. No prior experience or partner is necessary. All dances are taught and prompted. Generally, the dances are simpler earlier in the evening. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing, and have a good time!

Times & Admission

(unless otherwise noted)

Admission: \$5

Dance time:
7:00-10:00 pm

Introductory Workshop:
6:30 pm

FOR THE LATEST DANCE INFORMATION, CALL (805) 969-1511, THE SBCDS 24-HOUR DANCE HOTLINE

DATE	LOC	CALLER • BAND • Etc.
March 5	Sun CB	Carl Magagnosc • Immortal Lemmings Since they're immortal they can play close to the edge.
March 11	Sat CARP	Jonathan Southard • Swing Easy Swing Easy does it.
March 19	Sun CB	Erik Hoffman • Andrea Hoag & Daniel Steinberg (\$6) A great group of out-of-towners if ever we'd seen one.
April 2	Sun CB	Gary Shapiro • Chameleons • Hard to spot; easy to appreciate.
April 8	Sat CARP	Carl Magagnosc • David Roynce, Kristina Eriksen (Gibbs) & Gary Arcemont
April 16	Sun CB	Jonathan Southard • Kitchen Junket Preceding the dance we get together for our community potluck dinner, 5:30-6:30. Potluck admission: a dish to share plus \$1.
April 23	Sun CB	Kathy Anderson • Growling Old Geezers An exciting evening featuring talent from Dayton, Ohio, and Arroyo Grande.
April 30	Sun CB	Gary Shapiro • Hot Flashes • Bring sunscreen.
May 7	Sun CB	Carl Magagnosc • Drastic Measures We're a stop on their reunion tour. Corporate sponsorship pending.
May 13	Sat CARP	Gary Shapiro • Swing Easy
May 21	Sun CB	Jonathan Southard • Growling Old Geezers
May 27	Sat OP	TBD • TBD (\$6) Kickoff of the sixth annual Sprung Floor Dance Festival. Preceded by a potluck dinner at 5:00. It's also our first Oak Park dance of the year.
May 28	Sun CB	Sprung Floor Dance Festival Dance on the famous sprung floor, from 12 noon to 12 midnight, plus workshops. (\$TBD)

March 1995

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Other Events in Our Vicinity

Ojai — Saturday, April 1: Susan Michaels with the New Young Buzzards. 7:30-10:30, intro 7:00. Ojai Art Center, 113 Montgomery St. Admission \$6. For more info call Ginny at (805) 646-0832.
 San Luis Obispo — Second Saturdays, 8-11 pm, and fourth Sundays, 7-10 pm, at the SLO Veteran's Hall, 801 Grand Ave. near

Monterey St. Intro one-half hour earlier. Admission \$5. For info call (805) 541-0201 (hotline), 541-1148 (David) or 783-0112 (Cynthia).
 Los Angeles area — Contra dances every weekend and now every Thursday in Pasadena. For more info call the 24-hour LA Dance Hotline at (818) 951-2003.

Geek Alert!

Contra Dance Resources on the Internet

If you thought TV was a waste of time, you haven't met the Internet. But at least the Internet has some resources related to contra dance, and here's a partial list.

Usenet: the rec.folk-dancing newsgroup includes discussions about various kinds of folk dance, including contra dance. The SBCDS calendar is posted there on a quarterly basis. Locally, the tri.dance newsgroup is intended to include postings about performance and recreational dance in the tri-counties. At this point, SBCDS, Ojai and SLO contra dance information appears there but not much else.

Mailing lists: the rec.folk-dancing newsgroup is also available via e-mail for those without Usenet access. Send subscription requests to tjw+@pitt.edu (Terry J. Wood) and ask to be put on the Folk Dance Mailing List (FDML).

Another mailing list, focusing on contra dancing throughout the state, is available

by sending an e-mail message to mailserv@pitzer.edu. The body of the message should contain: subscribe caddance-coop-1. No subject is required.

This mailing list includes a comprehensive weekly dance schedule for the entire state plus advance notice of special events.

E-mail: messages to the SBCDS can be sent to cannon@alumni.caltech.edu.

The SBCDS is an affiliate of the Country Dance and Song Society. Their address is 71231.2526@compuserve.com.

World-Wide Web: you could start with the (unofficial) SBCDS home page, <URL: <http://www.rain.org/~gshapiro/sbcds/>>, and explore the links from there.

If you have a computer and a modem, and you're interested, but all of the above is gobbledegook to you, talk to me and I'll try to point you to an appropriate resource.

Gary Shapiro

Santa Barbara Country Dance Society

dance star

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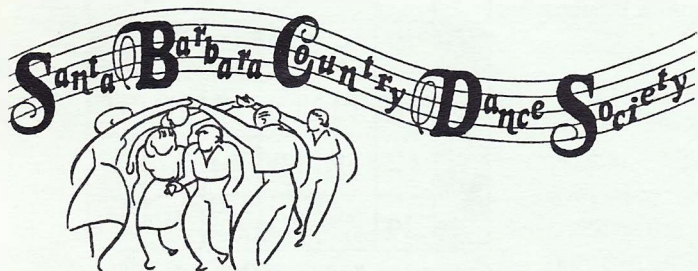
Editing & layout: Gary Shapiro

The Dance Star encourages articles, letters, artwork, comments and suggestions. Send or phone them to the SBCDS, or bring them to a dance.

FREE DANCING

Bring two friends, new to contra dancing, to an SBCDS dance, and you get a free dance pass. Or bring one friend to one dance, and another friend to another dance. Same deal.

New dancers receive a free dance pass good for their second dance in any case.



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