

## Dancer Survey

A contra dancer survey form is included with mailed copies of this issue. The survey was designed and is being conducted by Kelli Butler and David Beard independently of the SBCDS Board, but with the Board's cooperation and appreciation.

We ask everyone to take a few moments to answer the questions and return the survey through the mail or in the survey box at one of our dances.

If you didn't receive a survey in the mail, please obtain one at the entry desk.



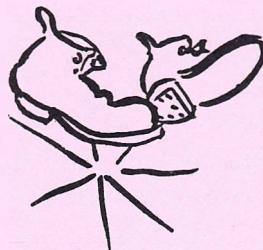
## New Goleta Series Kicks Off March 8

The first new SBCDS dance series in a number of years comes to Goleta on March 8, continuing on April 12 and May 10, second Fridays all.

Many of us are excited about the new series and we hope you are too. When excitement is in the air, a great time is guaranteed.

We'll dance at the Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 820 North Fairview, just north of Cathedral Oaks on the right. We'll use the main hall, which has a raised wooden floor.

Note that Friday dance times are one-half hour later than our other dances: Orientation at 7, dance 7:30-10:30.



## New Year's Dance Almost Blown Away

by Gary Shapiro and William Noack

For the first time ever, Santa Barbara celebrated New Year's Eve by having an all night contra dance in the beautiful Carrillo Ballroom with its sprung floor. This was the first time ever that the Carrillo Ballroom was used for an all-night event and it also became the first time ever there was an all-night power outage! *O Fortuna! Fortuna plango vulnera!* (Carmina Burana)

Indeed, as Dante wrote, "I came into a place void of all light...combated by warring winds." An incredible windstorm hit Santa Barbara, knocking out the power 16 minutes after our Dawn Dance began at 8 p.m. Winds ranging from 50 to 60 miles per hour hit our fair city, causing extensive damage.

So out went the power and we danced by candlelight and faint acoustic music in this huge ballroom for the first two hours—until we were rescued by a gas-powered generator, a 600-pound monster, which restored amplification and some lights.

Many have wondered how we came upon a 9 kilowatt generator on New Year's Eve. Two words: (1) divine and (2) providence. Perhaps it was divine providence that caused Carl Magagnosc and Autumn



CARA MOORE

**Where were you when the lights went out?**  
The originally scheduled callers and a clock.

Brook to buy a house that required a sump pump which had to run even during power failures, which required them to purchase a generator. Perhaps divine providence also brought them into our dance community years ago so that they see **NEW YEAR'S**, next page



Post Office Box 21904 • Santa Barbara, CA 93121-1904

### Forward & Address Correction

You will not receive our mailings after date on label unless you sign in at a dance or notify us.

## Firsthand

## Farewell to the Carpinteria Dance

by Bruce Morden

While dancing to some wonderful Irish fiddle music from the young Celtic Fiddlers of Santa Barbara, Gary Shapiro called the last regular Carpinteria dance on February 10, 1996. He even wrote a special dance for the occasion—*Carpinteria Forever*—with lots of ocean waves!

The dance has been very special to Andrea and me, as we coordinated the dance. Coming from Los Angeles, where we had danced for years, the very first weekend we lived in Carpinteria was the very first Carpinteria dance. We baked a cake for that first dance on October 5, 1990, a tradition that lasted five and a half years to the end.

We have had great bands play over the years including Hillbillies From Mars, Growling Old Geezers, Turtle Creek, Swing Easy, Chameleons, Hot Flashes and Carik. Local callers like Erik Hoffman, Carl Magagnosc and Cara Moore, as well as out-of-towners like Susan Michaels, James Hutson and Drew Tronvig kept our feet moving.

One night, Drew forgot to show up to call the dance. The band and the dancers were ready so between Jonathan Southard, Elliott Karpeles and myself, some old favorites were called and we danced to ten o'clock. It was the first time Jonathan called. Carpinteria has welcomed his special style and challenging dance lineups ever since.

Harold Hallikainen and Louise Legate met at a Carpinteria dance and are now happily married, so the Carpinteria dance is special to them. They attended the last dance even though they live in San Luis Obispo, which has its own second Saturday dance.

We moved around town from the Main School to the Community Church and back again. We also moved from Friday to Saturday and from the fourth weekend to the second. We had avocado dances and harvest dances. Sometimes it was cold outside, sometimes it was hot, but always inside the dancers were warm and friendly. One rainy night when Carrillo Ballroom was being used for emergency shel-

ter and 101 was closed to Ventura, we still had a rousing dance in Carpinteria.

It was always a small dance with 35 to 40 dancers. Unfortunately, that was its undoing as a viable dance. We will miss its intimacy and its special moments, but we will remember them together as we see you at other dances in Santa Barbara, Ojai, San Luis Obispo and soon in Goleta.

•••••

*Bruce and Andrea Morden have coordinated the Carpinteria dance for four and a half years.*

## Sannella Farewell

Ted Sannella, one of the foremost practitioners on the traditional American dance scene, died at his home in Maine on November 18, 1995, at the age of 67. Ted was a prolific composer of dances, many of which we dance today. He was a popular leader, creator and organizer of dance series and served on the board of many dance-related organizations.

(For a more detailed tribute, see the January/February issue of the *Country Dance & Song Society News*, which may be viewed at our dances. Also see its subsequent issues, which will include written memories of Ted.)

On November 19 at the Carrillo Ballroom, the caller, unaware of what had happened the day before, called two Ted Sannella dances: *Fiddleheads* and *Love and Kisses*.

## New Year's from front page

could pull this one off. Maybe not quite the oil that burned for eight days, but we'll take it!

Enormous, humungous, gargantuan thanks, then, to Autumn and Carl, and to David Troy, who volunteered to help them hoist the beast onto their truck, and to many others who pitched in in various ways.

The Golden Throat Award goes to Drew Tronvig, who readily plugged himself into the unplugged calling duties, using a makeshift megaphone.

Then there's the Golden Piton Award. It goes to the Hot Flashes, who so valiantly played almost their entire set acoustically, clinging as close to the edge of the stage as safety would allow, and then some.

Amidst all the excitement, callers Drew and/or Gary neglected to properly introduce one of our featured bands, Kristina Eriksen & the New Resolutions. So, from left to right, they are (please hold your applause until they are all introduced): Kristina Eriksen on piano and accordion, Tony Johansen on bodhran, guitar and pennywhistle, Mary Sossong on fiddle, and Bill Flores on dobro, guitar, banjo and saxophone. (Okay—now.)

Due to the exertion of generator moving, a recent recovery from the flu, and his piano playing duties for the graveyard shift, Carl was unable to call for us. Helping pick up the slack were meteorologist Warren Blier of Los Angeles and David Michael Cottle of Provo, Utah.

All in all, a successful, spirited, well-attended event, in spite of the meteorological anomaly that undoubtedly kept many away.

“

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven:  
...a time to weep, a time to laugh; a  
time to mourn, a time to dance...

”

Ecclesiastes 3:1,4



## Is This a Memory?

"One diversion... is of souls forming a circle to more fully unify and project their thought energy. Gracefully subtle dancing can also take place when souls whirl around each other in a mixture of energy, blending and separating in exotic patterns of light and color."

This is an excerpt from the book *Journey of Souls* by Michael Newton, that intimates that there is another realm we experience between lives. If one is to believe in reincarnation, is the joy of dancing a memory of that other existence, and in this interim of our journey can we experience a true momentary unification of souls? Could this mean that dancing is experiencing a little heaven on earth?

For certain, contra dancing is a joyous experience—you can see it in everyone's eyes. It seems to unify the souls that come together in a mixture of energy, good energy. In contra dance, at last, one can join in a communal spirit of timed steps and purposeful motions and not have to stand separated from their dance partner trying to conjure up the half-forgotten contortion of the "twist" or some lame version of the "watoosie."

Whether we twirl ever so "gentlesse" or

## SBCDS Board News

### Carl Moves On But Not Too Far

Carl Magagnosc has been part of the Santa Barbara Country Dance Society from the beginning: he was part of the original organizing committee, 14 years ago.

After this unprecedented term of service as a member of the SBCDS Board of Directors and its predecessor, the Coordinating Committee, Carl Magagnosc has resigned from the Board effective March 31.

His contributions to the dance community over the years are beyond measure, and while we will miss him on the Board, he will continue to contribute in myriad ways. Thank you, Carl, thank you.

spin around in a mad dervish (as we often do), contra dance is a revelation to me each time I dance it. I can't stop smiling from the true joyousness of communion with everyone in this unique style of dance.

So I must thank the musicians, the callers, and the coordinators for making possible a little heaven on earth for me.

*Britt Iliff*

Remaining on the Board are Peter Glatz, Bob Hamber, Elliott Karpeles, Bob Leonard, Gary Shapiro and Bettine Wallin. If you think you might like to serve on the Board, we recommend that you attend a few meetings.

The Board meets about once a month, usually on a weekday evening at 7:30. The next meeting is scheduled for February 28. Members of the dance community are welcome to attend and participate or observe. Just call 969-1511 or talk to a Board member to let us know you'll be there and we'll tell you where "there" is. (It won't be in Oakland.)

## Suggestion Action

The suggestion for a suggestion box recently came to us almost simultaneously from three independent sources: Steve Davis, Shane and Kelli Butler, and Rick Goodfriend. Since then, Shane has constructed quite a handsome box, and Steve made up a pleasing suggestion form. Thanks everyone! Now all we have to do is submit some suggestions. On your mark, get set...

In other suggestion news:

Recently, you may have noticed two extra speakers at the rear of the Carrillo Ballroom. They allow more sound to reach more of the room with lower volume out of the front speakers. Our question to you is: what do you think? Is it worth the extra cost (\$15 per dance) for sound?

If you like the new arrangement, thanks go to Steve Davis, who suggested extra speakers, and to sound technician Gary Atkins, who evaluated the general idea and implemented the specifics.

## Southard on the Mend

Jonathan Southard tells us that he looks forward to being back dancing and calling within two to four months, as he recovers from a compression fracture and three cracked vertebrae (ouch!).

He sends his best wishes to everybody, and we, of course, wish him well and a speedy recovery.

## Star Gazer

### Spring Sprang Sprung

Put away your snow shoes (yeah, right), put on your dance shoes, and spring into action for some of this:

March 1-3: **Fiddling Frog Dance Festival** at Camp Colby in the Angeles National Forest. Quick! The camp still might have room for men and couples. (818) 785-3839 or ac515@lafn.org.

Sat., March 16: **St. Patrick's Day Celebration**, open jam session. Instrumentalists, singers, dancers and listeners are all welcome. Rusty's Pizza, 232 W. Carrillo, 6 p.m. to 11 or 12. 682-1593.

Sun., March 17: **St. Patrick's Day Contra Dance**. It's not often that we get one of these. See calendar (page 6) for details.

Tues., March 19: **CD Release Party for Granite Tapestry**. They are Michael Mendelson, Kristina Eriksen, Nathan O'Hara and Joe Gram. At Soho, 1221 State St., 7:30 p.m.

Sat., March 30: Bay Area Country Dance Society (BACDS) **Playford Ball** in Oakland. (510) 644-2706.

May 10-12: **Dance Awakening** contra dance camp at Harbin Hot Springs, features caller **Ron Buchanan** and musicians **Anita Anderson**, **Rex Blazer** and **Cyd Smith**. Santa Barbara's own **Dragonfly**, which is **Michael Gutin** on accordion, guitar and vocals, and **Aviva Speceal** on bowed psaltery and Celtic harp, performs for the evening waltzes. 649-5189.

May 25-26: Six years ago this spring it sprang forth: the **Sprung Floor Dance Festival**. This year it features **Erik Hoffman** and the fabulous Sprung Floor on Memorial Day weekend. See the calendar, and the flyer when it comes out (May?) for more details.

June 14-16: **KCBX Live Oak Music Festival** just up the road a bit. Always a great variety of great music, and optional

See **GAZER**, page 5

# letters

## Attendance Part 1

Thank you, Gary, for bringing up the need to make it rewarding for new people to keep on dancing ["Thoughts on Increasing Attendance"]. The use of the contra dance as a "singles scene" and "center set syndrome" which seem to keep some people from dancing with many others still irks me. This seems to show a tad of snobbishness in the people who so discriminate and thereby limit their choice of partners to familiar faces or potential dates. When new people clump together because so-called experienced dancers don't want to give up their individualistic styles or interrupt their personal flow, it also serves to clog up the dancing for everybody else.

Are there solutions to this potentially perpetual and ever increasing problem? I think so. Going back to the old way of random selection of partners with little or no pre-booking would help a lot. Spontaneity might return, and new dancers, as well as some long timers would have more chances to dance with a variety of partners and in different lines. If callers who observe problems during the teaching would assert themselves and integrate the couples having problems into more adept four-somes before the music begins and use "surgical strikes" to balance the line, it would help those of us who are unaware or choose not to cultivate the new people ourselves. We will generally, thank goodness, do what the caller tells us. If those who rely on the dances to maintain their social life made plans to see friends at the break or after the dance rather than monopolizing them at dances it might help increase our experience by helping new people to join in. Unless I'm mistaken, contra dancing is not supposed to be an exclusive event.

Thank you also for the new half-price after the break policy. I believe most people will be honest and help SBCDS keep on providing the dances. They do not happen by magic although they seem to. I really appreciate the work of all the volunteers and do not begrudge the pay to the callers, the bands, the professional sound

person and the Parks Department for the hall rent. Keep up the good work!

MARGOT EISER

OJAI

## Attendance Part 2

*In December, the SBCDS Board received a letter from Steve Davis entitled "More Thoughts on Increasing Attendance." It is a letter that demonstrates sincere interest in the Santa Barbara dance community. A lot of thought and effort went into writing it. However, the letter, and Steve's subsequent condensation of it, were very long, so we have chosen to attempt to summarize the letter here, and make the full article available at the dance or via fax or e-mail.*

1. Agreement with original "Thoughts on Increasing Attendance" which appeared in the previous Dance Star. The article suggested making newcomers feel welcome.

2. But the SBCDS Board and its volunteers can do more, beyond what the dancers can do.

3. Advocates analyzing our dances as a "product" and that the product includes the band, the caller, the dances, the hall and the sound system. Steve markets software products, and says the ideas for marketing contra dances are the same.

4. Proceeds to analyze these components in light of the winter schedule.

a. Bands: Says 9 bands for 11 dances is sufficient variety.

b. Callers: 5 callers for 11 dances, or omitting the two holiday dances, there were 3 local callers for 9 dances. Says this is not enough variety. Has seen much more variety in North Carolina. In L.A. there is not a lot of variety, but this is okay "because of the experience level of the callers."

Supports local callers getting experience, but believes there is a correlation between the quality of calling and level of attendance.

c. Dances: wonders how easy, intermediate and challenging dances are balanced. When are squares included. Recommends a dancer survey to guide the callers.



d. Dance Hall: great hall, no discussion needed.

e. Sound System: sound has been weak in spots, recommends extra speakers. Cites Harvest Moon last year at Oak Park. Thinks sound person needs to be at the mixer most of the time.

5. Market analysis: looks at research, advertising and word of mouth.

a. Research: recommends a survey, suggestion cards and statistical analysis of attendance.

b. Advertising: would like to see Dance Stars at the L.A. dances.

c. Word of mouth: suggests giving a free evening to any dancer who brings a newcomer.

6. Changes to the dance will change attendance. These changes can be measured and controlled.

7. Specific suggestions to the Board: (a) Conduct a survey. (b) Be sure the Dance Star is available at L.A. dances. (c) More variety in callers, dance levels and choice of dances (e.g., squares) based on survey results. (d) Work with the sound person to improve the sound.

8. Concludes by restating marketing as a non-magic, known process. "This is not 'rocket science,' just plain old-fashioned marketing."

9. In an end note, commends the SBCDS Board for the changes that have taken place since the letter was sent: the new speakers, the suggestion box and the survey.

## Attendance Part 3

*The editor has written a response to the above, by number. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the Board.*

2. The SBCDS can do more with more volunteers.

3. A contra dance is not a product one buys at Wal-Mart and passively consumes. The most important component of this "product" is the dancers themselves. Nor is a contra dance a stand-alone discrete event. It relates to other dances, and to social relationships that extend from one dance to another and out into the world at large. This is not to say marketing concepts are totally useless, just that we must be sophisticated in using them.

4b. Steve seems to be more interested in caller quality than variety, with variety being a way to bring more quality if the



smaller pool of callers is lacking.

Attendance *is* tracked. No correlation has been observed between performers and attendance, except that *any* out-of-town performer draws more, including unknown out-of-town performers.

Local callers, and others too, can all stand to improve and hopefully welcome your comments and suggestions.

One way we can continue to support local callers *and* get more visiting callers is to increase the number of dances. For example, I would like to see a year-round fourth Saturday dance, with the summer part of it being the current Oak Park series. Would anyone like to help pull this together?

4c. Callers aim to generally increase the challenge level of dances as the evening progresses. This is spelled out in the second paragraph at the top of the calendar page.

Squares are included at the discretion of the caller. I feel remiss for not calling enough of them.

4e & 7d. The extra speakers are in and will be available for Oak Park by May. Also, sound technician Gary Atkins welcomes and encourages comments from dancers regarding the sound. After all, that's who the sound is there for.

The amount of attention required at the sound board depends to a great extent on the band. Wild Asparagus, for example, plays many instruments during a tune or set, and uses a great deal of dynamics. It is not a typical band. Gary says that to some extent he sets things up so the bands can make adjustments themselves. For example, he will set up two switchable microphones for a musician with two instruments. But Gary acknowledges that there are times when he is paying less attention than he might. If he's napping, he says, we're allowed to wake him up.

5a, 7a. Unbeknownst to Steve, a different group proposed a survey and a suggestion box. David Beard and Kelli Butler designed the survey. Shane Butler built a suggestion box. Steve designed the suggestion form. The main reason these got done was that people came forward to do them.

A survey is not a vote. Besides, should a tyranny of the majority (if indeed there is one) dictate what kinds of dances are of-

fered to *everybody*? Also, if we have scared away newcomers, we need to cater to the newcomers of the future to some extent. Most of them won't be filling out the survey. There's a thin line between keeping the hard core happy and being welcoming to new dancers, and we need to walk that line carefully. If we do so, future generations will walk that line after us.

5b,7b. Thank you for pointing this out. It is our desire to have schedules available in SLO, Ojai and the L.A. area. I would like to hear from anyone who would like to take responsibility for one third, two thirds or all of this.

5c. It has been SBCDS policy for several years to give a dance pass to any dancer who brings *two* newcomers, and they don't need to be brought to the same dance. Is this acceptable? It was announced in display-ad style in the Summer 1994, Spring 1995, and Fall 1995 Dance Stars, and now it's mentioned here. How else should we promote this promotion?

6. Many variables and little data. Forty-some dances in a year, many permutations of callers/bands, weather, season, other events, what's on TV, phases of the moon, etc.

7. The Board always welcomes suggestions, especially when they're accompanied by energy to help implement them.

8. In a way, rocket science is easier than marketing, let alone the complexities of fomenting a dance community. Rocket science has exact rules of chemistry and physics. Marketing is full of sociology, psychology, economics and worst of all, statistics.

## corrections

The correct contact numbers for Monarch Grove Morris are 685-8007 (Gene Lerner) and 965-8116 (Gwen or Josh).

The Santa Cruz Dawn Dance is always on President's Day weekend which is always in February. Sorry for the confusion in the Winter "Star Gazer" column.

The New Year's Eve Dawn Dance was not "the first dawn contra dance in the history of Santa Barbara," just the first in the history of the SBCDS, and the first in the Carrillo Ballroom.

Our apologies for referring to Kristina Eriksen by the wrong name.

## Gazer from page 3

camping, too. 781-3030.

June 21-23: California Traditional Music Society's Folk Music, Dance and Storytelling Festival in Calabasas. Plenty of dance, especially contra, plenty of talent such as Peter Barnes, Frank Ferrel, Tom Hinds, Kathy Anderson, and many others. (818) 342-7664 or [ctms@lafn.org](mailto:ctms@lafn.org).

June also marks another season of BACDS week-long dance camps. Sierra Swing, the American Week, is at the former Camp Alta Sierra, June 29-July 6. (415) 864-6911 or [ClintonSF@aol.com](mailto:ClintonSF@aol.com). Family Week is at the same location July 6-13. (707) 765-6559. English Week is July 13-20 at the Mendocino Woodlands camp. (415) 856-3038 or [perner@hpl.hp.com](mailto:perner@hpl.hp.com).

Flyers for these and other events are or will be available at our dances. Or, talk to any dancer with a glazed look in his or her eyes for the latest dance camp tips.



Santa Barbara Country Dance Society

**dance star**

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<http://www.rain.org/~gshapiro/sbcds/>

Newsletter Czar: Gary Shapiro

The SBCDS encourages articles, letters, illustrations, comments and suggestions. Use phone, e-mail, mail, personal delivery at a dance or the suggestion box.

Opinions expressed are those of the individual authors.



Spring 1996

# Santa Barbara 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 E. Carrillo St., Santa Barbara. Co-sponsor: S.B. Parks & Rec. Dept.  
 GOL Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 820 N. Fairview, Goleta  
 OP Oak Park Dance Platform, on Junipero at Calle Real, S. B.

Come dance on the best floor in the West at the Carrillo Ballroom, under the stars at Oak Park and at our brand-new Goleta location. 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. Join us then 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: \$6

Dance time:

7:00–10:00 p.m.

Goleta: 7:30–10:30 p.m.

**Introductory Workshop:**

6:30 p.m.

Goleta: 7:00 p.m.

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

DATE LOC CALLER • BAND

March 3 Sun CB Carl Magagnosc • Kristina & the Broken Resolutions  
 March 8 Fri GOL Gary Shapiro • Chameleons • Our very first Goleta dance.  
 March 17 Sun CB Chuck Galt • Kitchen Junket  
 A rare St. Patrick's Day contra dance. What luck! To celebrate, the band will play all Irish music, at times joined by members of the young Celtic Fiddlers group. Irish step dance demo during the break. Wow!  
 March 31 Sun CB James Hutson • Growling Old Geezers  
 Preceding the dance, it's our annual spring potluck from 5:30–6:30. Bring food to share and tableware plus \$1.

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April 7 Sun CB Gary Shapiro • Hot Flashes  
 Reminder: move your clock forward an hour, and dance whenever possible.  
 April 12 Fri GOL Drew Tronvig • Immortal Lemmings • Goleta Lemming Festival  
 April 21 Sun CB Susan Michaels • Chameleons

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May 5 Sun CB Carl Magagnosc • Immortal Lemmings  
 May 10 Fri GOL Carl Magagnosc • Contracats • Listen to them Cats purr.  
 May 19 Sun CB Gary Shapiro • Swing Easy  
 May 25 Sat OP Sprung Floor Dance Festival, the Seventh Annual  
 2:30–5:00 Free afternoon dance: Open mike • Open band • Call Gary at 682-5523 if you'd like to call some dances and/or play in the band.  
 5:00–6:30 Potluck in the picnic area across the creek  
 7:00–10:00 Evening dance: Erik Hoffman • TBA • Intro at 6:30 as usual  
 10:30–mid Jam, sing and party at Rusty's Pizza, 232 W. Carrillo at Bath  
 May 26 Sun CB Sprung Floor Dance Festival  
 Callers Erik Hoffman plus local callers and several hot Central and South Coast bands. Contra dancing on the sprung floor and simultaneous dance workshops. 12 noon until 12 midnight (\$TBA).

### March 1996

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### April 1996

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### May 1996

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## Some Other Events in Our Vicinity

Ojai — Fri., Apr. 26: Gary Shapiro with the Hot Flashes. Sat., May 18: James Hutson, band TBA. Ojai Art Center, 113 S. Montgomery St. All dances 7:30–10:30, intro 7:00, \$6. For info call Ginny at (805) 646-0832.

San Luis Obispo — Second (and possibly fourth) Saturdays, 8–11 p.m., intro 7:30. Veteran's Hall, 801 Grand Ave. near Monterey St., \$5. Often, Int'l Folk Dancing at 5:30. (805) 541-0201 (hotline).  
 Los Angeles area — Contra dances every weekend. (818) 951-2003.