

DANCE STAR

Issue Number 67, Spring 2006 • News, Articles & Calendar of Events

On Respectful Communications with Stage Talent

Over the many years of dancing, calling, and playing music at contra dances, we have noticed a dominant thread about our fellow dancers – they can be quite opinionated about their callers, musicians and sound engineers. We appreciate the passion; however, in recent months there have been incidents in the way these opinions have been expressed in Santa Barbara that have been unhelpful, even hurtful and for some, decrease our desire to take the Carrillo Ballroom stage. So we offer four guidelines that will aid in communicating with onstage talent:

- Please hold your comments to the caller or musicians to the break or the end of the evening. The talent is concentrating hard during the dance to provide the best experience for the dancers. Comments while the dance is in progress are a major distraction and almost always degrade the quality of the calling, music or both.

- Keep in mind that it is impossible to always please everyone. While we are very happy to listen your point of view, please consider that we often get very contradicting suggestions from different dancers. For example, one dancer may believe the band is playing too fast while another may think the band is playing too slow (and the caller may think we are playing juuuuusst right!).

- If you have difficulty hearing the caller, or the volume is uncomfortable to you, please don't tell the band. They can't do anything about it. Kindly let the sound engineer (or the caller when he/she is not calling/teaching) know your observations.

- Remember that while the callers, musicians and sound engineers try our hardest to make the dance special, for the most part we are not professionals. Just like you, this is what we do for fun. We show up early, leave late, and set up lots of equipment. And though we do get paid, the amount we get barely compensates us for our time and expenses. Our real compensation is the appreciation we

get from the dancers (so don't be afraid to whoop and holler – we love it!). And we are trying to reach for the stars – to create a fresh, exciting experience for the dancers. Occasionally, what we try might not work. But often it *does* work, and when it does the dance benefits accordingly (more whooping and hollering!).

The success of a dance, most would agree, is the effective interaction between the caller, musicians, and the dancers themselves. (Certainly others also play key roles – sound engineer, volunteers, dance producers...but the core is these three elements.) This is not a performance the talent provides for the dancers, rather a cooperative effort to provide an exhilarating experience for everyone. The dancers feed off the energy of the caller and musicians, and that energy then gets sent back to the caller and musicians who feed off the dancers. The more the talent feels the respect and appreciation of the dancers, the more they will give back in return. And that's what we are all after, isn't it?

Suzanne Duffy, Jeffrey Spero

Join our discussion/announcement/
information email list.
Info at www.sbcds.org

Star Attractions

An April 24 Opportunity

The OpporTunists are a group of talented multi-instrumentalists from the San Francisco area who play tunes ranging from Celtic to old time on a variety of instruments for your dancing pleasure.

The OpporTunists include Alan Snyder on fiddle, keyboard, and guitar. Alan is well known among dancers in Southern California as a dancer and a musician, having played at many dances there in recent years with his former band, Bog an Lochan. Alan's musical background is centered on Cape Breton, Scottish, and Irish tunes, but with a variety of other influences.

Alan is joined by Topher Gayle, whose musical background ranges from bluegrass to swing to folk to just about anything. Topher plays acoustic bass, guitar, mandolin, mandola, ukelele, percussion, and pretty much anything else he can get his hands on.

Joining Alan and Topher on this tour is David Hansen on guitar, bass, and mandolin. David played for many years with Alan in Bog an Lochan, where he was well regarded for his driving guitar rhythm.



P.O. Box 21904, Santa Barbara, CA 93121

DANCE SCHEDULE – Spring 2006

SBCDS Annual Board Meeting: Sunday, March 12, 4:30 p.m., Carrillo Recreation Center. Like all Board meetings, it is an open meeting. Send agenda items to Gary or Elliott@sbcdds.org, or call 682-5523 or 682-1877, respectively.

Santa Barbara English Country Dances

Westside Community Center
423 W. Victoria, Santa Barbara
(Where Victoria ends at Hwy 101 on the downtown side)
805-682-5523 www.sbcdds.org/ecd

Dance every Tuesday, except for two Wednesdays, as noted
7:15 to 9:30

Admission \$3; whole evenings of live music TBA, \$5

March 8 (Wed)	April 4	May 2
March 14	April 12 (Wed)	May 9
March 21	April 18	May 16
March 28	April 25	May 30

All dances led by Gary Shapiro and/or Alice Williams.

San Luis Obispo

Odd Fellows Hall, 520 Dana St, San Luis Obispo
(Hwy 101 Marsh St. exit, left on Nipomo, left on Dana)
805-541-0201 www.cccds.org

Dance on Second Saturdays
7:30 to 10:30 (7:00 Workshop) Admission \$9

March 11	Donna Karpeles/Foggy Bay
April 8	Barbara Stewart/Michael Gutin Band
May 13	Gary Shapiro/Crabapples

Ojai Art Center

113 S. Montgomery, Ojai
(South of East Ojai Avenue)
805-933-0660

Contra Dances

www.ojaiartcenter.org/dance.htm

7:30 to 10:30 (7:00 Workshop) Admission: \$8.00

March 11	Jeff Spero/Burnin' Ticks
April 15	Susan Petrick/Ruby's Dream
May 13	TBA/Chopped Liver

English Country Dances

www.geocities.com/ojaiecd/

Second and fourth Mondays

7:00 to 9:00 Admission: \$5.00

March 13	April 10	May 8
March 28	April 24	May 22

April 10 dance led by Annie Laskey,
others by Gary Shapiro or TBA

Santa Barbara Contra Dances

Carrillo Ballroom, 100 E. Carrillo (at Anacapa)
805-969-1511 www.sbcdds.org

Dance Every Sunday, Except as Noted
6:30 to 9:30 (6:00 Workshop)

\$8.00 unless otherwise noted

March 5	Jim Saxe/Chopped Liver
March 12	Gary Shapiro/Growling Old Geezers
March 19	Barbara Stewart/Michael's Mixed Nuts
March 26	Donna Karpeles/Porch Dogs
April 2	Gary Shapiro/Chopped Liver
April 9	Jim Saxe/Growling Old Geezers Festive Spring Potluck precedes the dance. Bring lots to share, tableware and \$1
April 16	Susan Petrick/Turtle Creek
April 23	Warren Blier/OpporTunists
April 30	ZESTY DANCE 6:30 to 10:00 Zesty Caller TBA/Zesty Band TBA \$9
May 7	Jeremy Korr/MG & the Generators
May 14	Gary Shapiro/Paddy O'Furniture
May 21	Karen Fontana/Growling Old Geezers
May 28	Sprung Floor Dance Festival Dance 1 p.m. to 1 a.m. for only \$25. After 7 p.m. enter for \$15. 1 p.m. Barbara Stewart/Growling Old Geezers 3:30 Donna Karpeles/Ruby's Dream 6:00 Dinner break 7:30 Chuck Galt/Fiddle Tunas 10:25 Gary Shapiro/TBA

Santa Barbara Contra Dances are co-sponsored by
the Santa Barbara Country Dance Society and



SBCDS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation

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Guest producer of this issue: Gary Shapiro

Editorial contributions are welcome! Email dance-related material to
dancestar@sbcdds.org or mail to

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The deadline for the next issue is May 1.

Our special thanks to all the many volunteers who give their time and efforts to make the dances fun and contribute to the content of this publication.

Disclaimers: The opinions expressed in the articles, news, and letters do not necessarily reflect the views of SBCDS.

All schedule information subject to change. Accuracy not guaranteed.