



Footnotes

Portland Country Dance Community · Jan./Feb. 1993

SPECIAL EVENTS

Welcome to 1993—truly a prime year for dancing! (Actually, as all of you former math majors will recognize, 1993 will be a prime year for *everything*.)

PCDC's **First Friday Dance** starts at an earlier hour than usual this month: 12 AM. Several callers and bands will entertain you, and there will be a festive Dessert Potluck, yet we'll wrap it all up by 1 AM! Are we getting efficient, or what? January 1, at the Multnomah Art Center.

Just as the Potluck's sweet tastes begin to fade, replace them with the dulcet tones of the **NewTonians** at PCDC's **English Country Dance**, Saturday January 2. **Molly Libby** will teach you the steps to this kinder and gentler dance form. 8 PM at Fulton Community Center.

The **Beginner Musician Sessions** have diversified. There is some kind of jam every Wednesday, and all sessions are open to any of you bearing any instrument. On the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Wednesdays of each month the action will be at the **Horse Brass Pub** (4534 SE Belmont) from 7 to 9 PM. Musicians get in free, and are paid in applause and tips—the latter usually being first converted into, ah, *liquid* currency. Tempos at the Horse Brass will be a bit livelier than at the other two monthly jams. The 2nd and 4th Wednesday sessions will be at Sue Songer's house. The 2nd Wednesday will be taught by either Dan Compton or George Penk, both incredible fiddlers and incredibly patient teachers. The 4th Wednesday will be an open jam. Questions? Call Sue at 503/293-1446.

It's going to be a hot night at the PCDC **Second Saturday Dance**, January 9. Proud pappy Rich Kuras will call a mixture of squares and contras, while the **Rose City Aces** pour out the tunes to keep your toes tapping. 8 PM at MAC.

If you don't already know about PCDC's **Ski-Dance Weekend**, January 29-31 at the Mt. Hood Kiwanis Camp, then you're probably too late. Still, you might call Barbara Smoody (503/249-8300) to check for last-minute cancellations. Seattle's **Mike Richardson, Anita Anderson & Stuart Williams** will be on hand to deal with your dancing needs, and Mt. Hood's record-setting snowfalls will take care of the rest.

Announcing the birth of a new regular dance series! Or, more accurately, a new *intermittent* regular dance series: the **Fifth Saturday Rose City Aces Country Dance**. Seems those Aces just have so much music building up inside them, they had to find more occasions to release it. The series opener features the calling of Seattle's **Sherry Nevins**. Sherry is the one of the founders of contra- and square-dancing in the Northwest, yet her repertoire and enthusiasm continue to grow each year. Plan on a great time! January 30, 8 PM at FCC.

The PCDC **First Friday Dance** of February 5 will welcome caller **Jana Rygas** up from Eugene. Several bands are still fighting for the opportunity to play for her—watch for further announcements. Jana has a reputation for picking great dances and teaching them efficiently, so you can expect a fun-filled evening. 8 PM at MAC.

The annual **Dean Kenty Benefit Scholarship Dance** will be held at PCDC's **Second Saturday Dance** on February 13. All proceeds will go to the PCDC Scholarship Fund, which provides subsidies to help PCDC members attend dance-related events both locally and throughout the country. Callers will be **Maria Falasca** and **Merilee Karr**, and the bands donating their energy will be **Cat's Cradle** and **Clyde & Susan Curley**. 8 PM at MAC.

Dear Professor Dance...™

This week I had the pleasure of attending my first dance camp away from home—Northern week at Ashokan. It's been wonderful—fabulous music, great dancing, sociable sauna. I've felt very much at home in this friendly group despite a few behavioral differences... in particular, there seem to be far fewer CPG's here than in the PNW. The majority of gentlemen at Ashokan seem happily committed to their chosen sweeties, some are obviously anxious to waste no time and form commitments with other campers, and a few others clearly ought to be committed. All in all, Ashokan has offered me the pleasurable opportunity to experience a higher number of commitment desirous men than has been available to me back on the West coast.

Tell me, Professor Dance, is the percentage of CPG's lower on the East coast, or did I just get lucky at Ashokan?

—Homeward bound, but starry-eyed.

Dear Starry-eyed:

As we discovered last time, the CPG (Commitment Phobic Gentleman) problem may be an illusion caused by a reaction to the SAD (Shut-up And Dance) women who haunt West Coast dances, using gentlemen for their pleasure and then casting them away. Since 90% of the letters we receive are from women, perhaps their views have dominated this column and distorted the nature of the problem. (On the other hand, if it wasn't for the intellectual curiosity of the ladies, especially Seattle ladies, there probably wouldn't be a Professor Dance column at all.)

Perhaps it wasn't that you were lucky but rather it was the East Coast gentlemen who were lucky not to have been traumatized by too many SAD women.

However, you didn't fully explain the most important part of your letter: what is a "sociable sauna"? Is this something about which we should be concerned?

—Professor Dance

Dear Professor Dance:

This past August two of us had the pleasure of attending an outdoor contradance in Bellingham.

At the break it became apparent that my friend and I were attracted to the same woman, whom I'll call Susan. We wished each other good luck and turned our attention to the second half of the dance. Well, it came down to the last waltz and I was standing near this *jeune femme*. I asked her to waltz and she said yes. We waltzed halfway around the room enjoying ourselves when my friend, whom I'll call Jerry because that's his name, tapped me on the shoulder and asked if he could cut in. I was momentarily speechless. What should I have done, Professor? Politely declined? Asked him to step outside? Challenged him to a duel? As it turned out I

asked the lady what she wanted and she simply shrugged her shoulders. In the end I yielded.

—Morris in Seattle

Dear Morris (because that's your name) in Seattle:

We can't speak from personal experience as this has only happened to us once and the lady objected, holding onto us tightly whispering "Don't let him touch me, don't let him touch me."

As you suggested you could have asked Jerry to step outside. Since the dance was outdoors already you would have had a few extra turns around the floor while he figured out how to step *more* outside. You could have replied in a loud whisper "Don't get excited Jerry, you don't want to break your parole again." Then to Susan, "Don't worry, he won't do anything while I'm around."

Proper etiquette says your response was the correct one. If you are a much better waltzer than your rival you might have done yourself the most good by yielding.

Please write and tell us what actually did happen to the lives of Susan, Morris and Jerry. Did she stay with you or did she get on the plane? On the other hand, it doesn't take much to see that the problems of three little people don't amount to a hill o' beans in this crazy world. Someday you'll understand that.

—Professor Dance

No matter how humble, Professor Dance will answer your questions. Write him at the Professor Dance Library, Box 9644, Spokane WA 99209.

From the Ballroom to Hell

"I do not believe that any woman can or does waltz without being improperly aroused, to a greater or less degree. She may not, at first, understand her feelings, or recognize as harmful or sinful those emotions which must come to every woman who has a particle of warmth in her nature, when in such close connection with the opposite sex; but she is, though unconsciously, none the less surely sowing seed which will one day ripen, if not into open sin and shame, into a nature more or less depraved and health more or less impaired. Any woman with a nature so cold as not to be aroused by the perfect execution of the waltz, is entirely unfit to make any man happy as his wife, and if she be willing to indulge in such pleasures with every ball-room libertine, she is not the woman any man wants for a wife. It is a noticeable fact that a man who knows the ways of a ball-room rarely seeks a wife there. When he wishes to marry he chooses for a wife a woman who has not been fondled and embraced by every dancing man in town.

"It is also noticeable that after marriage few men care to dance, or to have their wives dance."

—Ex Dancing Master

Giving Weight

A Weighty Topic

by Erik Hoffman, reprinted from the Santa Barbara *Dance Star*

"Giving weight" is a thing we callers and dancers often talk about, and wonder why some people are naturals, others never seem to get it, and yet most develop. So now I take this opportunity to write a few words about it, in the hope that it might expand discussion and experimentation, and thus people might look at themselves and see if they can (or need) to take the next step in improving their dancing.

First, what is meant by giving weight? I think of it in terms of connection. The limp arm "fish grip" is the opposite of what establishes this connection. A firm connection—support in the arms, bent elbows, unlocked knees, coming from your center of gravity, moving with confidence—all this goes into this concept of giving weight.

In ballroom dance they call it making a frame, or "framing." When a couple stands in ballroom position (close to our swing position) with the man's right hand behind the woman's back, her left on his shoulder, and the other hands joined in "free space" they make a "frame," a kind of circle with their arms and bodies.

If this frame is well supported, if both are operating from their center of gravity, and they are pushing ever so slightly against each other, causing a bit of tension in their arms and carriage, then they are ready to respond immediately to each other, with hardly any work. Information about where you are going and what figure is next is transmitted almost immediately through this frame. If instead one person does not hold his or her own, the other person has to carry the "weight" of both, and the conduit of communication along the frame is all but lost. This is extremely tiring for the person carrying the weight.

This is important: giving weight actually makes it easier to dance. It increases efficiency, makes it easier to get around, makes the connection between you and your partners stronger, and makes dancing all around much more pleasurable.

So, how can you learn to give weight? The first and most important way is to learn to dance from your center of gravity. This is somewhere in your lower abdomen. Physicists will tell you that this changes depending on how you are holding your

body, but for dancing purposes this is the "center" from where we move, the resting center of gravity.

One way to find it is to spread your feet apart, and stand with your knees bent. Bounce up and down from your knees, forward and back. Feel where the weight of your torso centers: the part that you seem to be moving around, where the "heft" is. This is the center that you move from.

To see its importance, try this Aikido exercise with a friend. Stand with your feet under your shoulders, knees slightly bent, relaxed. Imagine your weight at the top of your forehead—put your attention there and breath a couple times, focusing on that lofty location. Then have your friend gently push your shoulder, and feel how well balanced you are. Now take your stance again, this time putting your focus on the center of your lower abdomen, your "center." Breath again, from this center, and then have your friend again give the push. See if you can tell a difference.

It is from this "center" that our best dancing comes. I find that having that center face the direction of movement opens up my dancing. When the center faces my partner it gives a firm support and openness that makes for great dancing. When the center leads my dancing, it makes dancing almost effortless.

In contradancing, the frame can be between two people—as in allemandes, swings, or promenades, or more, as in circles, lines, basket swings, and the like. When the "frame" is created, it transmits the movement throughout the figure. Weight in a circle, supportive arms coming from your center, increases the awareness of all in the circle, making it one of the most rewarding and satisfying figures. Weight in an allemande not only makes it possible to complete the figure on time, but if it's a leisurely one it makes it feel great. Giving (and getting) weight increases the flow and improves the ability to move through the figures, as well as just increasing the all-around fun of dancing.

So look at yourself, see if you are a "fish gripper," experiment with your sense of center, and see how your dancing changes. And when it all comes down, give weight!

CALENDAR • JAN. / FEB. '93

Note: most dances offer a beginners' workshop half an hour before the listed time.

January

1st (Fr) PCDC First Friday Dance.
Cancelled. (Our musicians are still recovering from last night.)

2nd (Sa) PCDC English Country Dance. 8 pm at FCC. Caller: Molly Libby. Music: the NewTonians.

6th (We) Beginner Music Session. 7-9 pm at Horse Brass Pub. *See Special Events.*

8th (Fr) Second Friday English Country Dance. 8 pm at BWT. Caller: Nan Evans. Music: George Penk, Fred Nussbaum & Heather Pinney. *(No street shoes allowed.)*

9th (Sa) PCDC Second Saturday Dance. 8 pm at MAC. Caller: Rich Kuras. Music: Rose City Aces.

13th (We) Beginner Music Session. 6:30 pm. Leader: George Penk or Dan Compton. Call Sue (503/293-1446) for details.

15th (Fr) Portland Ceili Society Dance. 8:30 pm at PPAA.

16th (Sa) Third Saturday Contradance. 8 pm at FCC. Caller: Paul McCullough. Music: Alan Garren & friends.

20th (We) Beginner Music Session. 7-9 pm at Horse Brass Pub. *See Special Events.*

22nd (Fr) Fourth Friday Contra & Square Dance Party. 8 pm at BWT. Caller: Maria Falasca. Music: Cat's Cradle. *(No street shoes allowed.)*

22nd (Fr) Fourth Friday Scandinavian Dance. 8 pm at IOOF Lodge, 187 High NE, Salem. Check with Sharon (503/364-6713) to confirm.

23th (Sa) Fourth Saturday Contradance. 8 pm at FCC. Caller: Ted Remillard. Music: The Contradance String Quartet: Dan Compton, Clyde Curley, Fred Nussbaum & George Penk.

26th (Tu) PCDC Board Meeting. 6:30 pm at Nan's.

27th (We) Beginner Music Session. Call Sue (503/293-1446) for details.

29th-31st (Fr-Su) PCDC Ski-Dance Weekend. *See Special Events.*

30th (Sa) Fifth Saturday Rose City Aces Country Dance. 8 pm at FCC. Caller: Sherry Nevins. *See Special Events.*

February

3rd (We) Beginner Music Session. 7-9 pm at Horse Brass Pub. *See Special Events.*

5th (Fr) PCDC First Friday Dance. 8 pm at MAC. Caller: Jana Rygas. Music: TBA.

6th (Sa) PCDC English Country Dance. 8 pm at FCC. Caller: Dick Lewis. Music: the NewTonians.

6th (Sa) Ad Vielle Que Pourra in Concert. French village dance music. 8 pm at NWSC. 503/283-2688 for more details.

10th (We) Beginner Music Session. 6:30 pm. Leader: Dan Compton or George Penk. Call Sue (503/293-1446) for details.

12th (Fr) Second Friday English Country Dance. 8 pm at BWT. Caller: Nan Evans. Music: Kathleen Towers, Beverly Stafford, Dave Goldman & Fred Nussbaum. *(No street shoes allowed.)*

13th (Sa) PCDC's Dean Kenty Benefit Scholarship Dance. 8 pm at MAC. Callers: Maria Falasca, Merilee Karr. Music: Cat's Cradle; Susan & Clyde Curley. *See Special Events.*

17th (We) Beginner Music Session. 7-9 pm at Horse Brass Pub. *See Special Events.*

19th (Fr) Portland Ceili Society Dance. 8:30 pm at PPAA.

20th (Sa) Third Saturday Contradance. Caller: Paul McCullough. Music: George Penk, Heather Pinney & Dan Compton.

20th (Sa) John McCutcheon in Concert. 8 pm at NWSC. 503/283-2688 for more details.

24th (We) Beginner Music Session. Call Sue (503/293-1446) for details.

26th (Fr) Fourth Friday Contra & Square Dance Party. 8 pm at BWT. Caller: Nan Evans. Music: Dan Compton, Fran Slefer, Lauren Sheehan, Ron Nagy. *(No street shoes allowed.)*

26th (Fr) Fourth Friday Scandinavian Dance. 8 pm at IOOF Lodge, 187 High NE, Salem. Check with Sharon (503/364-6713) to confirm.

27th (Sa) Fourth Saturday Contradance. 8 pm at FCC. Caller: Ted Remillard. Music: Cat's Cradle.

March

5th (Fr) PCDC First Friday Dance. 8 pm at MAC. Caller & Music TBA.

6th (Sa) PCDC English Country Dance. 8 pm at FCC. Caller: Molly Libby. Music: the NewTonians.

13th (Sa) PCDC Second Saturday Dance. 8 pm at MAC. Caller: Elinor Preston. Music: George Penk, Clyde Curley, Dan Compton.

Upriver Dances

Corvallis

First Saturday Dances

8 PM at the Benton Center, 630 NW 7th. Beginner's instruction at 7:30 PM.

February 6 Caller: Elinor Preston. Music: TBA.

Third Saturday Dances

8 PM at the Benton Center.

January 16 Caller: Maria Falasca. Music: Cat's Cradle.

February 20 Caller: Mary Devlin. Music: Creighton Lindsay, Lefty Head, Dennis Rothrock.

Eugene

Second Saturday Dances

8 PM at the Kelly Middle School, North Park & Howard. Beginner's instruction at 7:30 PM.

January 9 Caller: Nan Evans. Music: George Penk & Heather Pinney.

February 13 Caller: Laura Mé Smith. Music: a hot Seattle band.

Contramania Dances

More challenging dances, no beginner instruction. 4th Saturdays at the Kelly Middle School.

January 23 Caller: Elinor Preston. Music: Jeff & Nancy Cherniss

February 27 Caller: Woody Lane. Music: Island.



Portland Country Dance Location Acronyms

| | |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BWT | Burlingame Water Tower Dance Hall, SW 17th and Marigold (between Spring Garden and Taylor's Ferry Roads)—no street shoes permitted on the dance floor |
| EAT | East Avenue Tavern, 727 E. Burnside |
| ECHO | Echo Theater, 1515 SE 37th |
| FAS | French American School, 1849 SW 58th (Sylvan) |
| FCC | Fulton Community Center, 68 SW Miles (off Barbur, traffic light just east of Terwilliger) |
| HS | Hough School, 1900 Daniels, Vancouver, WA. |
| MAC | Multnomah Art Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy. (at 31st) |
| MLB | Melody Lane Ballroom, 615 SE Alder |
| NWSC | Northwest Service Center, 1819 NW Everett |
| OC | The Old Church, 1422 SW 11th |
| PPAA | Portland Police Athletic Assoc., 618 SE Alder |

Regular dances

Unless stated, all dances are open to everyone—experienced or not, with or without partners, and feature live music. All dances are taught and children are admitted without charge. At any PCDC dance where sit-in musicians are encouraged to play, they will be admitted free.

PCDC First Friday Dance. This contra dance showcases local and regional callers and dance bands. If you'd like to call or book a band for this dance, please contact PCDC. Musicians are encouraged to sit in with the hired band, but will not be miked. MAC, 8 pm, beginners' workshop 7:30 pm. \$5/\$4 for seniors and PCDC members.

PCDC First Saturday English Country Dance. English Country dance is a source of modern square and contra

dance style. FCC, 8 pm, beginner's workshop 7:30 pm. \$5/\$4 seniors and PCDC members.

Second Friday English Country Dance. At least a little experience advised. Nan Evans calls and coordinates. BWT, 8 pm, no beginner's workshop. \$4.

PCDC Second Saturday Dance, the longest continuously running contra dance in the state. This dance is similar to the first Friday dance, maintaining the tradition. MAC, 8 pm, beginners' workshop 7:30 pm. \$5/\$4 seniors and PCDC members.

Portland Ceili Society Dance is "a gathering of friends" with lively Irish music, frequently played by world famous musicians. Very aerobic dancing and a full

bar are only a few of the notable features of this Third Friday of the month dance, held at Portland Police Athletic Association. Cost \$5.

Third Saturday Contradance is a dance series organized by Paul McCullough. The dances tend towards the challenging side. FCC, 8 pm, beginner's workshop 7:30 pm. \$5.

Fourth Friday Contra and Square Dance Party. Contras and squares, usually called by organizer Mary Devlin. Not so much teaching. BWT, 8 pm, no beginner's workshop. \$4.

Fourth Saturday Contradance is another independent dance series, organized by Ted Remillard. FCC, 8 pm, beginner's workshop 7:30 pm. \$5.

PLEASE let us know immediately if your address changes. We get charged a quarter for each newsletter that is returned. And worse yet, you won't get your newsletter. Give your old and new address. Contact Bob Nisbet, 10101 SW 55th, Portland, OR 97210, 244-3971.

This newsletter, *Footnotes*, is published every other month. If you have a dance announcement for the newsletter, please contact the newsletter committee, or send it to PCDC, PO Box 14636, Portland, 97214. Give a concise description of your event, including featured band and callers, date, time, place, cost, and phone number for further info. The information provided here is as accurate as we can make it, and changes or cancellations may not be reflected in this calendar. We encourage submission of letters and articles of interest to the community. Letters and articles become the property of *Footnotes* on publication and may be edited. The DEADLINE for the Mar/Apr. calendar is Feb. 15th.

Portland Country Dance Community is a consortium of dancers, musicians and callers promoting country dance and music traditions through regular dances, workshops and other

events. Everyone is welcome. Our interests include American, English, Celtic, Scandinavian and related traditions, expressed through live performance and participation. With this newsletter, we hope to exchange information and share concerns about traditional music and dance. We publish the newsletter every other month and distribute it to members of PCDC and other folk organizations in the Pacific Northwest. Membership is \$10.00 a year (\$8.00 for seniors), which provides a \$1.00 discount at our regular dances and subscription to the newsletter. Donations in excess of \$10 per year are tax deductible. Correspondence may be sent to PCDC, PO Box 14636, Portland, OR 97214. We are an educational non-profit corporation and also a center of the Country Dance and Song Society, a national organization whose address is 17 New South Street, Northampton, MA 01060.

The PCDC board is an elected body of volunteers from the community. Meetings are held once a month, and community members are always welcome. Help, ideas and feedback from the community, in whatever form, is necessary to make PCDC events happen. Your contributions

of time and support are appreciated. Call any board member for further info. The PCDC board comprises:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Kathy Bowman | 244-0125 |
| Allen Cook | 628-2946 |
| Darrell Desper | 252-6203 |
| Nan Evans | 245-5675 |
| Barbara & Rik Fischer Smoody | 249-8300 |
| Dave Goldman | 245-2185 |
| Dave Hamlin | 691-1758 |
| Wendy Dana | 244-7022 |
| John Kral | 230-1126 |
| Michele Smith | 771-1261 |
| Diana O'Farrell | 244-6635 |
| Tyler Robinson | 293-2810 |

Chair: George
 Secretary: Allen
 Treasurer: Nan
 Booking: Michele
 Publicity: Diana
 Newsletter: Dave (245-2185), Terri (235-3153)
 Mailing list & membership:
 Bob Nisbet (244-3971)

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4823

PCDC October Board Minutes. Plans for the Ski-Dance weekend are coming along well. The feedback from this year's Suttle Lake weekend was mainly quite positive; the only consistent complaint was that people want stronger coffee next year. The Warner Grange dance went well, but we might consider renting porta-potties there in the future if the water pressure doesn't get better. The meeting was then turned over to arranging housing and shuttle service for the multitude of musicians descending on Portland for the Child's Play dance.

PCDC December Board Minutes. Ski-Dance is filling up nicely. We discussed the New Year's Eve dance; this year we'll try setting up the food tables in the side hall. Considerable discussion followed about what type of coffee or espresso to serve. Also fruit juice. We have the possibility of a special dance in late March with midwest caller Roger Diggle. The North American Folk Alliance is considering Portland for its 1995 national conference; we agreed to join several other Portland folkie organizations to help, at least minimally. For the second year in a row, receipts from dances and camps have exceeded our expenses by about \$2,000 (about 6%). While it would be prudent to always maintain a certain cushion in the bank, we can now afford to relax a little about spending money on worthy events. In the ongoing search for dance hall alternatives to MAC, Tyler reported on a dance he attended at a mid-sized hall in Laurelhurst.

Next board meeting: January 26, at Nan's (9616 SW 12th Drive).

Portland Country Dance Community
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WEEK OF MARCH 22-24 1991
MUSICIANS
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