



---

# PCDC Footnotes

January–February 2025

---

---

## In this issue...

- **Ring in the new year twice!** This year, you can ring in the holiday on two different occasions: first, at Joyride's NYE dance, held at Fulton Hall (*not* Polish) on December 31st—and then again on [January 4th at Norse Hall](#) (*not* Fulton)!
- **Your PCDC board and committees have gotten a *lot* done this year.** Kathy Story breaks it down for you in [Good News to Share as We Wrap up 2024](#).
- **It's still dirt-cheap!** For only \$15 a year, you can be a vital part of PCDC and all it does. Read Lindsey Grayzel's thoughtful answer to the question, "[Why Be a PCDC Member?](#)" and then get your friends to sign up!
- **The Portland Megaband season is upon us.** The dance is March 8th this year, with advance admission sales starting in February. See "[The 2025 Megaband Season Begins](#)" by Sue Songer.
- **A good time for all at Portland's English Ball.** Read David Macemon's review ("[Highlights from the 2024 Portland English Country Ball](#)") and plan ahead for next year.
- **If you're a fan of English dance,** you'll want to [Find Your Way to Northwest Passage in 2025!](#)
- **Calling all musicians:** Check out "[Second Thursday Tune Sessions for Winter and Spring 2025](#)" for updates on tune teaching sessions and "[Come Make Music Mondays at the Kennedy School](#)" for news about Kennedy School jam sessions.
- **April showers bring great music, calling, and dance!** Read Kim Appleberry's inimitable description of the treats in store at this year's [Portland Rainedance weekend](#).

## Additional resources

**For a calendar of upcoming dances and events,** go to the [PCDC calendar](#), plug in the month you want to see, and click **Go**. You can customize your view by choosing the category of events you want to display.

### **For info on the PCDC board and committees:**

For a peek into the goings-on of the PCDC Board, see the [PCDC board meeting summaries](#). For a list of board and committee members, see [portlandcountrydance.org/board-members](http://portlandcountrydance.org/board-members).



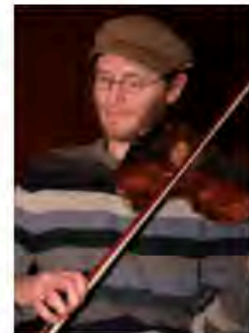
# PCDC New Year's Dance!

## Saturday, January 4th

### Two Bands! Two Callers!



Electrically charged duo Countercurrent (Alex Sturbaum & Brian Lindsay from Olympia) will open the evening, with fellow Olympian, Jesse Partridge calling. They'll be followed by our own Noah Grunzweig calling with The Fiddle Hellions Big Band, headed by Betsy Branch, George Penk, Sue Songer and Bill Tomczak. You won't want to miss this!!



---

**Where:** Norse Hall, 111 NE 11th Ave, Portland

**When:** Lesson at 7:30, dancing 8pm-12:15am

**Cost:** \$15-35, sliding scale

**Covid Protocols:** Though not required, masking and up-to-date vaccination is recommended to help keep our community healthy.

**Dessert Potluck:** Yes! Bring something to share!

**Note:** We'll be contra dancing in the main floor big ballroom – no blues or waltz this year.



---

# President's Corner: Good News to Share as We Wrap up 2024

By Kathy Story, PCDC Board President

Happy New Year, dance and music friends! As we begin a new year, I want to update you on what PCDC has been doing the last 12 months. There is so much good news to share. Our board, committees, and other volunteers worked hard to organize great dance and music series and special events for our community. And the community turned up to support and celebrate their efforts. Our dances are back to pre-COVID attendance levels, Hillsboro contradances returned for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, and all of our annual special events happened this year. Our organization is in a better position financially than last year at this time.

We also added new initiatives in 2024. As a result of our apprentice program, two new sound techs are providing sound at contra dances. We now own sound equipment stored at Fulton Hall in a new cabinet. We implemented a new and successful way to hire bands for ECD dances. We started weekly slow jams for contra and ECD tunes. We experimented with a workshop to test and improve new ECD dances by local choreographers. Our regular ECD and contra dance series continued to have excellent local and out-of-town talent, and new bands premiered this year.

Special events in 2024 included:

- Megaband returning to Smith Hall at PSU
- Raindance contra dance weekend at Norse Hall
- Annual members' picnic and end-of-summer picnic
- Northwest Passage ECD residential long weekend on Mount Hood
- English Ball and workshops
- Tuesday night contra dance with George Marshall at Polish Hall
- New Year's contra dance at Norse Hall

Behind the scenes, we made major advancements in policies and procedures to keep our community welcoming, safe, efficient, and sustainable. We archived important historical information (check out the old issues of *Footnotes*) and are finalizing a membership app that lets you create your own account, check your renewal date, sign up for automatic renewal, and perform other functions.

I trust that 2025 will bring more opportunities for us to share the joy that is dance and music and to improve our organization. If you have ideas for how to do that, I'm interested! You can always reach me at [board-chair@portlandcountrydance.org](mailto:board-chair@portlandcountrydance.org) or see me on the dance floor.



# Raindance 2025: April Showers Bring Great Music and Dance

By Kim Appleberry

Continuing the rebirth of incurable exuberance, Portland Raindance will again be bulging out the walls of Norse Hall in Portland, Oregon. Always on the 4th weekend of the 4th month, it's April 25–27, 2025. Mark what will be in store: When the Beatles first came to America in 1964, they played Carnegie Hall in New York. If only you could have been there. That would have stayed with you for the rest of your fabulous life. You have a similar introductory opportunity coming up in April—the West



Coast premiere of the Red Case Band. Soon to be on everybody's Hit Parade, they have been lighting up the dancers in New England and word is starting to leak out. You can swing at 45 rpm to the new groove of Alex Cumming, Stuart Kenney, Clara Stickney, Max Newman, and Matt Kenney. Don't miss this chance to say, "I was there." Get your Ticket to Ride: Raindance 2025!



Riptide comes your way at Raindance 2025

If you go to the beach and swim in the ocean, you might encounter a powerful current that wants to carry you away from shore. Trying to swim against it is futile—it will sweep you along where it wants to take you. You are bound to flow with it. This force is called a Riptide. The land-based version will be at Raindance 2025. Fear not, but rather dance in the onrushing waves of buoyancy. Alden Robinson, Owen Marshall, Baron Collins-Hill, and Pokey Hellenberg are the band Riptide. They will engulf you and rock you on the water. You may need to wear your swimsuit.

Gaye Fifer (right) has mastered the art of helping a group pull together for the common good. Also, she knows how to drive a great party to its peak. Wild and under control—a force for fun. She will lead you into moves from another galaxy. You will become more nimble than you could possibly imagine.





Will Mentor (left) has an exciting, driving delivery at the microphone. Like a great coach, he will add to your performance. With skill and zip, he calls carbonated dances that put bubbles in your shoes. Best put rocks in your pockets so you don't float away.

All this (plus bananas) available to you at Portland Rainedance 2025—our 14th year. Cost is \$185, or for dancers under 35, \$100. There is a family rate as well. If you would like to register three or more members of the same family, please email us to get the details. For a preview, take a look at the [Videos](#) tab on the [Rainedance website](#).

Registration is online only and opens January 1st. There will be a lottery for all those who register by midnight, February 1st. Registrations entered after February 1st will likely go on a waiting list.

More details and registration are on the website: [www.PortlandRainedance.org](http://www.PortlandRainedance.org)

---

## Second Thursday Tune Sessions for Winter and Spring 2025

*By Betsy Branch and Sharon Allen*



Greetings, dance musicians! Here is our schedule for upcoming 2nd Thursday tune teaching sessions and quarterly jams:

- Jan 9, 7–9 pm: jam (location TBD)
- Feb 13, 7–9 pm: George teaching in SW
- Mar 13, 7–9 pm: Betsy teaching in SE
- Apr 10, 7–9 pm: jam (location TBD)
- May 8, 7–9 pm: George teaching in SW

To sign up for these free dance tune sessions, email Betsy at [fiddlefrau@gmail.com](mailto:fiddlefrau@gmail.com) or Sharon Allen at [sharonjeanallen@yahoo.com](mailto:sharonjeanallen@yahoo.com). You can also email Betsy or Sharon to be added to the 2nd Thursday tune session email list.



For more information, including recordings and lists of tunes taught over the years, visit the [PCDC Dance Tune Session website](#).

---

# And They're Off! The 2025 Megaband Season Begins

By Sue Songer, Past PCDC President and Portland Megaband Director



Amidst this darkest time of year, there are 75 bright spots scattered throughout the Portland region and beyond. These are the Portland Megaband musicians who are already practicing the music we will play at our annual dance on March 8th. You probably know that many dancers travel long distances to attend the Megaband dance—but did you know that some musicians do, too? One Megaband member comes to Portland from France to participate in the band; another drives to Portland from Spokane every week; and several musicians make the weekly trip from the Corvallis region for rehearsals.

Our light spreads far and wide, culminating in the blaze of the Megaband dance, which this year will be at PSU's Smith Hall on March 8. To brighten your winter nights, imagine the energy of hundreds of dancers combined with 75 musicians and 3 callers. Don't you want to be a part of this, too?

Here are the details:

**When:** Saturday, March 8, 2025, **7:15–10:30 pm**. Newcomers' session at **6:45 pm** (note the earlier times)

**Where:** Smith Memorial Ballroom at PSU, 1825 SW Broadway, Portland

**Admission:** \$25 suggested (\$15–\$40 sliding scale). This is a benefit dance for PCDC.

**Callers:** Laurel Thomas, Rich Goss, William Watson

**Music:** THE PORTLAND MEGABAND! 75 musicians playing with precision and enthusiasm.

**More info and advance admission sales (recommended):** <https://portlandmegaband.com>



The annual Portland Megaband dance is a PCDC benefit event. The proceeds support dancer, musician, and caller development.

---

# Why be a PCDC Member?

*By Lindsey Grayzel*

## Ask not what membership can do for you, but what you can do for the membership!

When I began dancing at PCDC events in 2013, contra dance admission was set at \$9, or \$6 for students and seniors. If you paid \$15 annually (or \$12 for a senior), you could become a PCDC member and regular dance admission was reduced to \$7. Today, admission to both contra and English PCDC dances is offered on a sliding scale of \$6 to \$20. This policy was put in place to reduce the barrier of participation for dancers with limited incomes, regardless of age. If every dancer paid just \$6, then we would quickly not be able to afford to rent our hall or pay musicians, but thankfully, most people pay much more than the minimum. For those of you who pay \$10, \$15, or \$20 to attend a dance, you may have found yourself wondering why you should become a PCDC member. Indeed, membership numbers have been declining for years, even as dance revenue has been increasing.

When contra dancers are generous at the door, nightly profits are paid out in “shares” to the musicians and callers who worked that night. Contra dance bands and callers who turn out big crowds are rewarded financially by sharing profits from that night's dance revenue. English dances also share profits with talent through year-end accounting. Membership revenue and donations, on the other hand, go towards the PCDC general fund used for both boring but necessary things like insurance and exciting new community development initiatives that you may be unaware of. In 2013, I thought of my membership benefit as a two-dollar discount on dance admission. Today, I know that my membership benefit is about being a part of a stronger, more resilient, and more skilled dance and music community.

Current PCDC community development initiatives include:

### [Contra Dance Tune Sessions](#)

Musicians George Penk and Betsy Branch are paid by PCDC to teach community members common contra dance tunes. All instruments, all levels are welcome on the 2nd Thursday of each month. Free for attendees.

### [Contra Slow Jams](#)

On 1st and 3rd Mondays at McMenamins Kennedy School, musicians of all levels play tunes from the Portland Collection and Bill Matthiesen's waltz books. On 5th Mondays, musicians play Quebecois tunes. Free for attendees.

### [English Slow Jams](#)

On 2nd and 4th Mondays at McMenamins Kennedy School, musicians of all levels play tunes from the Barnes ECD books. Free for attendees.

### [Grants & scholarships](#)

PCDC members can apply for financial aid to attend skill-building dance and music camps that enrich their contribution to the community.

### [Sound Apprenticeship and Sound Equipment](#)

PCDC pays a small stipend for prospective sound technicians to receive on-the-job training from experienced sound technicians, paving the way for a stable pipeline of sweet sound at our dances in the years ahead. Through a combination of generous donations and general funds, PCDC now owns a set of basic sound equipment that technicians can use for dances at Fulton Hall.

To become a member, check your status, or update your membership, head to:

<https://portlandcountrydance.org/membership/>



---

## Find Your Way to Northwest Passage in 2025!

*By Cynthia Stenger, Northwest Passage Committee chair and PCDC Board member*



Save the date for 3 nights and 4 days of end-of-summer magic! Registration for this popular camp opens at the beginning of April, so mark your calendar!

**What:** English Country Dance weekend, including music and singing workshops

**When:** Labor Day weekend, August 29 through September 1, 2025

**Where:** Mt. Hood Kiwanis Camp, near Rhododendron, Oregon

**Who:** Callers Brooke Friendly and Jenny Beer; musicians Roguery (Anita Anderson, Dave Bartley, Shira Kammen, and Jim Oakden) and Idlewild (Sarah Bellows, Clara Byom, Jacob Jen, and Mirinisa Stewart-Tengco)

**More information available soon:**

<https://nwpdancecamp.org/>



# Highlights from the 2024 Portland English Country Ball

by David Macemon, English Ball Committee chair



The Portland English Country Ball Committee and a group of committed volunteers delivered a wonderful English ball weekend November 1st through 3rd at a new venue for this year only, the Milwaukie-Waluga Masonic Lodge.

The Friday night dance was well attended by both out-of-town guests and quite a few locals. Cynthia Stenger called to music provided by Laura Kuhlman, Brooke Bubna, and Jenny Peterson.



On Saturday afternoon, ball dancers attended a workshop at which they practiced the ball dances led (with positional calling) by our Ball caller, Pittsburgh's Gaye Fifer.

Gaye planned and executed a delightful program for the Saturday night ball. Bill Tomczak, Betsy Branch, and Lisa Scott provided music that was second to none. And as always, John Oorthuys delivered excellent sound for both days.

The Sunday brunch was held at the Burlingame Water Tower Dance Hall. A potluck providing yummy food and a wonderful mix of experienced and new callers taught at the open mic dance session. Thanks to all who attended and performed, and a big thanks to all the volunteers!



For 2025, we look forward to the completion of renovations at the Oaks Park Dance Pavilion. The Ball will take place November 7th through 9th with Laura Hatch calling, music by Fine Companions (Erik Weberg, Bill Tomczak, Betsy Branch, and Lisa Scott), and John Oorthuys providing sound. Registration will open in July 2025. You can find more information at <https://portlandecdball.info/>.

---

## Come Make Music with us Mondays at the Kennedy School

*By Kathy Story, PCDC Board President*

The Kennedy School Monday night jam sessions draw musicians at all levels. Come make music with us!

**What:** Jams for all acoustic instruments and levels of musicians, whether you read music or play by ear

**Where:** McMenamins Kennedy School, 5763 NE 33rd Avenue, Portland (off-street parking available)

**When:** Contra and waltz jam: 1st and 3rd Mondays, 7–9 pm

ECD jam: 2nd and 4th Mondays, 7–9 pm

Quebecois jam: 5th Mondays, 7–9 pm (other months, location TBA: email [pdxqjam@gmail.com](mailto:pdxqjam@gmail.com))

**Additional details:** At contra and waltz jams, we play tunes from the *Portland Collection* and Bill Matthiesen's waltz books. At ECD jams, we play tunes from the Barnes books. If you don't have these books, we're happy to share.

**Questions?** Contact Kathy Story at [board-chair@portlandcountrydance.org](mailto:board-chair@portlandcountrydance.org).