



# Bay Area Country Dancer

No.78- June 2009

[www.bacds.org](http://www.bacds.org)

## Balance the Bay, August 14-16

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Balance the Bay Contra weekend is back again...this time in August. San Francisco is a great place to cool down in the summer. We're in a new hall with a great floor (and easy access and parking). Also new is our Saturday dinner at the hall, which will be great chance to get to know new friends and old while recharging for the evening dance.

And speaking of dancing ... put on your dancin' shoes for Crowfoot and Adina Gordon. This electrifying band will get you moving and Adina will keep you smiling with her joyful calling style. Our own Swing Farm with Joyce Miller will fill out the weekend with their driving tunes and excellent calling. And to tune up your waltz skills, Richard Powers will lead workshops that will get you floating on the dance floor. With this lineup, why wait? Sign up now for this delightful dance weekend!

You can find more information and registration forms at [www.bacds.org/btb](http://www.bacds.org/btb). Early bird discounts are still available if you sign up by June 15. Work-trade discounts are also available. So mark your calendars. The fun starts on Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> and goes all the way through the special-edition San Francisco Contra on Sunday night.



## A Creative and Good-Karma-Building Volunteer Opportunity Awaits Fresh Insights and Energies

*Judy Rose Dornbush*

As July approaches, the volunteer production committee of BACDS' American Dance & Music Week at Mendocino is finalizing details for 2009 ... our sixth year!

As designers of this event, Joyce Cooper and I originally proposed in our mission statement to the BACDS Board of Directors that we aimed to "harness the energies of active organizers and reliable volunteers who branch throughout the Bay Area as well as into greater CDSS communities." As much as any of us dislikes reading long lists of names, this is definitely Joyce's and my moment to recognize and thank the myriad friends from around the country whose efforts have given life to a terrific venture:

**Advisors:** Kirston Koths, Mary Devlin (OR), Brad Foster (MA), Jens Dill, Jon Berger, Diane Zingale;  
**BACDS Board Representatives:** Mavis McGaugh, Mary Tabor, Scott Johnson;  
**Program Directors:** Jim Oakden, Susan Petrick;  
**Registrars:** Flip Alpern, Susan Amato, Loren Kalmes;  
**Treasurers:** Mary Cook (ME), Phillip Garrison, Ralph Canapa (IA);  
**Publicity:** Ellen Shattil;  
**Web Masters:** Dale Komai, Josh Kline (SoCal), Melissa Monty (SoCal);  
**Fundraising:** Lynn Ackerson, Brenda Goodwin (UT), Brooke Friendly (OR);  
**Special Events Managers:** Kalia Kliban, Wren, Tom Zell (OR), Holly Steussy, (VA), Given Harrison (SoCal), Adrienne Simpson, Loralyn Shepherd, Sharon Bottesch;  
**Sound Engineer/Gizmo Guy:** Marty Brenneis;  
**Dance Hall Managers/Sound Assistants:** Peter Bergonzi (SoCal), Ken Olcott, Bob Felch;  
**Dining Hall Managers:** Patricia Becker, Lea Smith, Jody Distler-Dill, Liz Macera, Peggy Craft (NC);  
**Bookstore Managers:** Nikki Herbst (IA), Linda Flanagan;  
**Crew Manager:** Ken Blackwood (Alberta);  
**Button Manager:** Jill Breslauer;  
**T-Shirt Manager:** Ellen Aaron;  
**Camper Hospitality:** Andrea Lehrer, Cate de Heer, Arie Niernberger;  
**English Week Managers:** Victoria Williams, Mary Luckhardt, Tom Colton, Loretta Guarino Reid;  
**Selfless Angels:** Dee Brown, Carol Werba (NJ).

In review, we have successfully met all of our original intentions ... save one. In order to provide and insure the responsible transition of management and programming opportunities and in order to ensure fresh insights and energies, Joyce and I had proposed establishing "a limited 3-year rotating managerial committee." We were devoted to recruiting apprentices whom we would guide and to whom we would hand off our warehouse of experience and information. Now, after nearly eight years of focusing on this event, . *Continued on page 2*

*Continued from page 1.* it is time for Joyce and me to step aside. But, alas, we have a lack: we have been unable to draw new General Managers to carry BACDS' American Dance and Music Weeks into the future

So, here's the pitch:

- Practically speaking, new management need not re-invent the wheel. Joyce and I have created a meticulous production syllabus documenting how the camp has evolved and noting who has what expertise and where to secure resources.
- We have continued support from a committed production crew as well as a network of dedicated campers.
- A creative and good-karma-building volunteer opportunity awaits fresh insights and energies.

**Opportunity is calling.** If *you* hear it ringing, please pick-up and contact us, Joyce Cooper and Judy Rose, <[amweek2009@amweek.org](mailto:amweek2009@amweek.org)>. Please.

We'll unfold the nuances and bolster you as you lead us into the future American Dance and Music Week.

*A personal note, if I may:* My deepest, heartfelt regard to Joyce Cooper for the nearly twenty years of our *Mutt & Jeff* friendship, for withstanding my naturally-curly crankiness, patiently listening to me moan and kvetch and, most of all, for saving my life ... literally. Thanks, Joyce!

*jr*

## **San Francisco English Country Dances on Summer Break**

*Craig W. Johnson*

The second Saturday/fourth Sunday San Francisco English Country dances at DanceGround Keriak are taking a summer holiday this year beginning in July. The June 13 dance has already been cancelled so that everyone can go to the Mad Robin Ball. (Go to the website at [www.madrobin.org](http://www.madrobin.org) for more information.)

There is one more Sunday afternoon dance on June 28. The Sunday dance will resume on September 27. The Saturday dances will begin again on October 10.

As someone pointed out while dancing a few weeks ago, it isn't often that one gets to do ECD with a bathtub hanging above you. We're lucky enough to have had one in the hall over the past few months, and it serves as a reminder that the hall is used by a number of performance dance groups. One of them is mounting a show over the summer and booked the hall well in advance, eliminating and shortening our summer dance times.

The dance committee discovered this only a few weeks ago, and we agreed that it would be very difficult to find an alternative hall and get the word out, so we're canceling the series for a few months. We also told the hall management that we really need our schedule honored, so that shouldn't happen again.

Have a wonderful summer. Be sure to look for other local dance opportunities at [www.bacds.org](http://www.bacds.org).

## **Celebration Dance**

*Susan Wageman*

This summer, I am celebrating my first half century by sponsoring the August 1st San Francisco Contra Dance. I am inviting all you dancers to come and dance for free to the music of Swing Farm, with Joyce Miller.

I've been dancing for as long as I can remember. Highlights include:

- Family Folk Dancing with Connie and Marianne Taylor
- Teaching folk dancing with my Mom at Camp Fire day camp
- Dudley Laughman playing fiddle and calling Ted's Triplets because only three couples were there when it was time to dance
- Marathon New England Folk Festivals every April until I moved to California (and a few after that, too)
- Learning to gypsy from Tony Saletan
- All the people who welcomed me into the Bay Area dance community after my husband passed away
- Surprising my parents (Bob and Leslie Fuller) by bringing Charlie Fenton to their 50th wedding anniversary dance at the Scout House in Concord
- The last dance, and the one before, and the one before that and all the wonderful dances yet to come!

This is my way of saying "Thank You!" to all the dancers, musicians, callers, organizers, managers, teachers, sound people, volunteers, and all the other generous people who are the dance community here in the San Francisco Bay Area, back in New England, and in so many other communities.

Please join me August 1<sup>st</sup> to celebrate this wonderful community with Swing Farm and Joyce Miller. Bring your friends. If you like, bring a potluck snack to share at the break. Even though you don't really need it, bring your money. Donations to BACDS will certainly be welcome, and Swing Farm will have CDs for sale.

But mostly, just bring yourself to help me celebrate the glory and the gift of dance.

# Contra Dancing in Fiction

Ruth Gorin

*Whirligig*, by Paul Flieschman, is a sad but ultimately hopeful young-adult novel, in which a young man makes a journey of redemption. Near the end, he hears music coming from a nearby hall and goes to see what it is.

. . . Across the street, cars were parking and people walking into the Town Hall. He drifted out, heard music, and followed the others as if under hypnosis.

A pianist was pounding out chords on a stage, surrounded by a fiddler, a flutist, and a woman plucking a stand-up bass. Beside them, a gangling man was calling out steps to the two rows of dancers below. The music was brisk, bouncy and infectious. Brent watched inconspicuously, leaning against the wall. Except for a few teenagers, the hall resembled a reunion of some sixties commune, with plenty of beards and ponytails in view. The caller's promptings, like an auctioneer's spiel, seemed almost to be in a foreign language.

"Allemand left. Now ladies' chain. Left-hand star. Back to the right. Actives down and back. Cast off. Everybody swing!"

Couples turned in circles, skirts rippling. Brent stared. It was a human whirligig, set in motion by music instead of wind. He sank into a chair and watched dance after dance. Suddenly, a young woman rushed up to him.

"We need one more couple." She held out her hands.

To his great amazement, he agreed. A few people clapped when he got to his feet. As before, the caller walked them through the dance slowly, without any music. Brent now recognized some of the steps. Knowing hands turned him left instead of right and pointed him toward the proper partner. Then the music started up at full speed and the dancers, like clock parts, began to turn. Arms reached for his. Faces whizzed past. He was instantly enmeshed with the others. Wordlessly they corrected him, adjusted his grip, smiled at him. He'd always been gawky. This hadn't changed. But the pattern of steps, repeated over and over, slowly began to sink in. The galloping tune had an Irish feel. It was exalting to be part of the twining and twirling, and strangely thrilling to touch other hands and to feel them grasping his. He felt like a bee returning to a hive, greeted and accepted by all. He clapped with the others when the music stopped, stood outside to cool off, and was promptly asked if he wanted to do the next one. His partner called the event a "contradance." It felt to Brent like his rite of reentry. He stayed all the way to the waltz at the end.

From *Whirligig* by Paul Fleishman, © 1998

## Volunteer Thanks

- ♪ Thanks to *Judy Rose Dornbush* and *Joyce Cooper* for six great years of running American Dance and Music Week.
- ♪ Thanks to *Robin Cohen* for eight years of managing Spring Dance Weekend.
- ♪ Thanks to *Susan Gere* for stepping into Robin's shoes as Spring Weekend Manager.
- ♪ Thanks to *Mavis McGaugh*, *Sharon Green*, and *Marty Brenneis* for organizing the dance demo booth at Solano Stroll next September.
- ♪ Thanks to *Bob Carragher*, *Graham Waldon*, and *Lacey Waldon* for organizing the *Contra Plus!* dance, and to Jim Oakden for encouraging them.
- ♪ Thanks to *Scott Gamble* for putting together the Oakland Free Dance Festival and for finding us an alternate hall for the April Oakland Contra when it was kicked out of its regular hall by a triple-booking error.
- ♪ Thanks to our outgoing Board members, *Annette Kindred* and *Barbara Furgason*.
- ♪ Thanks to our newly-elected first-time Board members, *Cory Rundle*, *Loren Gillin*, and *Mary Hill*.
- ♪ Thanks to all of our continuing Board members, *Alan Winston*, *Diane Zingale*, *Ellen Wall*, *Eric Black*, *Jens Dill*, *Joan Maramonte*, *Jody Distler-Dill*, *Joyce Cooper*, *Mary Tabor*, *Scott Johnson*, *Sharon Green*, *Susan Gere*.
- ♪ Thanks to *Scott Johnson* for his term as Board secretary, and to *Mary Hill* for volunteering to carry on the job.
- ♪ Thanks to *Joyce Fortune* for her grass-roots efforts to rebuild interest in Spring Dance Weekend.
- ♪ And thanks to all the rest of you who have helped out one way or another. We really couldn't do what we do if everybody didn't pitch in and help.

## 2009 – 2010 Board Members

The following list of people will serve as BACDS Board members for the upcoming year. Many thanks to outgoing Board members Annette Kindred and Barbara Furgason. Thanks also to Scott Johnson for his service as Secretary. Scott remains on the Board. Welcome new members Mary Hill, Cory Rundle, and Lorin Gillin.

Eric Black  
Joyce Cooper  
Jens Dill, President  
Jody Distler-Dill  
Susan Gere  
Lorin Gillin

Sharon Green  
Mary Hill, Secretary  
Scott Johnson  
Annette Kindred  
Joan Maramonte  
Cory Rundle

Mary Tabor  
Ellen Wall  
Alan Winston, Board Chair  
Diane Zingale, Treasurer

## From the President



The good news this spring is that we're getting more young people involved in BACDS activities. This is what we need to fulfill our mission of promoting, preserving, performing, and teaching traditional English and American music and dance. We've been working hard to pass the torch to the next generation, and now the next generation is reaching out to take it.

On April 8, we hosted a meeting with Ethan Hazzard-Watkins, the Youth Projects Intern at the Country Dance and Song Society (our national umbrella organization). Ethan ran a spirited brainstorming session involving people from all over the dance community from Fresno to the North Bay and Santa Cruz, including representatives from the Berkeley Folk Dancers and the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. There were lots of good ideas, some of them new even to those of us who'd done this kind of brainstorming before. And we all made new contacts that will help us move things forward.

Later in April, we sponsored the *Contra Plus!* dance organized by Bob Carragher, Graham Waldon, and Lacey Waldon. This was a mix of contra and couple dances, to the fabulous music of a band organized by Jim Oakden. It brought in over 50% more people than a regular Palo Alto contra, and might have brought in more if there hadn't been competition from the Oakland Free Dance Festival, and a big Gaskell's dance that same evening. The mixed format pleased some and disappointed others, as expected. For the most part, it was a success, and shows that we need tinker more with new ideas to find the ones that work best. Bob, Graham, and Lacey are thinking about trying again, and I encourage others to get involved.

Our home-grown youth scholarship program was an even bigger success at Spring Dance Weekend than it was at Fall Frolick. We collected more donations for the program than needed to fund the young people who attended, and the young people pitched in and really raised the camp experience to a new level. We expect to continue this program in coming years.

Youth attendance continues to build at our dances. Both Berkeley and Palo Alto are building a strong group of young dancers. And at this year's Board Elections, we welcomed two Board members from the younger generation, Cory Rundle and Mary Hill.

As you can read elsewhere, some of our older leadership is ready to step aside. We want to thank Judy Rose Dornbush and Joyce Cooper for creating American Dance and Music Week, and running it successfully for six years, and Robin Cohen for her eight-year tenure as manager of Spring Dance Weekend. This is another wonderful chance for more young people to step forward into leadership positions. Joining (or even leading or organizing) a camp or event committee is a wonderful experience. Sure, you have to give up a little of your spare time and energy to attend meetings, make phone calls, and doing the necessary tasks, but you also build closer bonds with a small group of people working on the same goal; you learn new skills; you get to contribute your own ideas; and you don't have to do it by yourself, because there are other people working with you.

We didn't sponsor our own National Dance Week program this year. Instead we joined with Scott Gamble's mini Oakland Dance Festival on April 26. We did a Contra workshop and an English workshop and had some good opportunities to pass out publicity flyers.

Financially, we're riding out the recession like everyone else. Dance attendance is up slightly this year. So are hall rents, so we're not out of the woods. The good news is that our summer camps seem to be filling up. English Week is full, American Week is a little behind last year in sign-ups, but not worried. Family Week just needs 3 or 4 more families to break even (more *youth!*). Keep bringing your friends to dance.

~ Jens Dill, BACDS President, [bacds-president@bacds.org](mailto:bacds-president@bacds.org)

## Upcoming Summer Events

June 13	Mad Robin Ball	<i>Kalia Kliban with The Tricky Brits</i>
June 13-14	San Francisco Free Folk Festival	
June 19-21	Faultline Frolic	<i>Cis Hinkle with Notorious</i>
July 4-11	Mendocino American Week	
July 5-11	BACDS Family Dance Week	
July 11-18	Mendocino English Week	
Aug 14-16	Balance the Bay	<i>Adina Gordon, Joyce Miller, Richard Powers with Crowfoot, Swing Farm</i>
Sep 18-20	Echo Summit	<i>Seth Tepfer, Beth Molaro, with Latter Day Lizards, Contrazz</i>

See [www.bacds.org](http://www.bacds.org) for more information. For events sponsored by neighboring organizations, see [www.nbcds.org](http://www.nbcds.org) (NBCDS), [www.scds.ca](http://www.scds.ca) (SCDS), [www.sffmc.org](http://www.sffmc.org) (SFFMC), [www.ccds.org](http://www.ccds.org) (CCDS), [santacruzdance.org](http://santacruzdance.org) (TDESC).

*Out of a Job? Down on your Luck? Come dance anyway! Remember that BACDS has a pay-what-you-can-afford policy at the door. If all the rest of your world is not going your way, we want you to be able to dance.*

This issue was edited by Julie Thomas and Loretta Guarino Reid. Send corrections to [caljuliet@comcast.net](mailto:caljuliet@comcast.net). Deadline for Fall *Dancer*: Aug 15. Send submissions to [caljuliet@comcast.net](mailto:caljuliet@comcast.net). Please join the conversation.