



Bay Area Country Dancer

No.104– December 2015

www.bacds.org

Get the Fever (March 11-13)

Spring Fever weekend this year will be a real treat. We have a lineup of callers and musicians that is simply awesome:

Callers:

- **Adina Gordon** finds an outlet for her loves of travel, music, dance and silliness by calling and dancing throughout the US and Canada, creating joy and minor chaos wherever she goes. Combining a voice that makes you want to do what she says with a commitment to using that power for good and not evil, Adina calls contra, English and squares both old and new that cause spontaneous eruptions of joy on dance floors. She counts it as a job well done whenever anyone says, "I don't really like squares, but I like your squares." was in the Bay Area for *Balance the Bay* in 2009.
- **Nikki Herbst** is a familiar face to anyone who went to one of our dance camps in Mendocino. She has been a dance gypsy for many years, and hopes to continue for many more. "Dancing and the dance community saved my life (it's a long story...), and I started teaching dance many years ago in the hope of spreading the goodness that I feel dancing together can bring to our lives. I love meeting new communities and returning to familiar ones, and I've been fortunate enough to lead English country dancing, contradancing and dance leader workshops at numerous festivals and camps and at community dances across the map."
- **Gaye Fifer** is a well-known caller who has been calling at dance weekends for many years. Her pleasant style and graceful teaching put dancers at ease and set the stage for a great dance experience. She has also taught numerous waltz workshops at virtually every dance weekend in the East.



Adina

Nikki

Gaye

Bands



- **Triple A Plus:** Audrey Knuth, Amy Englesberg, Andrew VanNorstrand and Noah VanNorstrand
- **Wilson's Arch:** Larry Unger, Sam Bartlett and Karina Wilson
- **the Whoots:** Shira Kammen, Jim Oakden, Michelle Levy and Charlie Hancock

We are really getting more than just three bands: *Audrey* was last out here in August with **The Gaslight Tinkers** and stayed on to play with *Larry* for a few dances in the following week. *Audrey* and *Amy* are 2/3 of **the Free Raisins** (*Jeff* couldn't make it), and *Noah* and *Andrew* are 2/3 of the **Great Bear Trio** (and all of the **Great Bear Duo**). *Larry* and *Sam* have been here many times with **Notorious**. Even our "local" musicians (*Shira*, *Jim*, *Michelle*, and *Charlie*) have played for us in too many combinations to count.

With all these talented musicians, we will have a *very full* track of music workshops to go with our two full tracks of dance. *Spring Fever* combines the best of two dance worlds: Contra and English. There is a full track of workshops in each of the two genres, and the evening dance program mixes them up in ways that will surprise you. English dancers bring a spirit of precision and timing to Contra dance, and Contra dancers bring a spirit of flourishes and twirls to English dance, and both are improved by it.

Don't miss it! To find out more, check out the Spring Fever website at www.bacds.org/springfever.

Auld Dance Syne?

Ring in the New Year at the New Year's Eve Contra Dance in Palo Alto. Lynn Ackerson will call and the band will be StringFire (Erik Ievins, Patti Cobb and James MacQueen). The dance will begin at 8:00 and last through the midnight hour until 12:15. The location is the First United Methodist Church at 625 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto.

For more information, see the Palo Alto dance website at bacds.org/series/contra/palo_alto.

Family Week Venue Change for 2016

By Vicki Solomon

BACDS Family Week will be at the Monte Toyon camp in 2016. Camp will be Sunday, July 3 through Friday, July 8. Camp starts early; campers can arrive at 10:30 am. Lunch is the first meal, and the fun starts immediately. There will be classes that afternoon.

The site Family Camp used in 2015 is making repairs to the kitchen, and is not available for our use in 2016. Monte Toyon is in Aptos, Santa Cruz County, so it is more convenient for most Family campers. There are redwood trees and a lovely dance floor and lots of spaces for classes. Mark your calendars, invite family and friends, and we'll see you there!

Contra College is Back! (see page 2)

English Week is coming (see page 3)

Contra College—the place to learn more about becoming a more comfortable dancer

by David Buesch

Learning to contra dance has traditionally been “a learn-as-you-go” experience, with new dancers (hopefully) gaining confidence with each dance. This is a tried and true method of learning (most of us have done it). However, there are times when one does not quite understand how or why a figure felt smooth or awkward, or when one would like to ask for clarification. *Contra College* is a teaching and learning environment for new, intermediate, and experienced dancers, taught by experienced callers with the support of several of the Bay Area’s respected musicians. During the College, teaching sessions will focus on the elements of a dance, with time for deliberate walk-throughs and questions. You will learn the best (and most ergonomic) way to enjoy the figures (and your partner), and finish the dance with a discussion of what went well (or not) and why. The teaching sessions are about 90 minutes each, so there is plenty of time to use a variety of dances with different choreography to practice, integrate, explore, and learn what is it about that dance and those you dance with that make it an enjoyable experience.

Contra College is for dancers of all skill levels. New and intermediate dancers have a steeper learning curve, but even the most experienced dancers can learn new things. We all remember those moments during our early dancing experience when things were happening just a little too fast, or what we heard was just not translated into the right movement. These can be awkward times, but for most, the ability to realize that we are there to enjoy these social moments is enough to keep the smile on our faces (if not to laugh outright). What helps the dance stay together, and helps newer dancers get from one end of the line to the other, is the experienced dancers who offer direction, encouragement, and guidance (verbally and nonverbally, or with the positioning of a hand, or just a smile). Many experienced dancers have found that learning to dance both roles offers a broader understanding of the dance and the interaction with other dancers. There are many opportunities to better understand the nuances of a gesture or figure, or why a particular tune takes a dance to a whole other level.

This year, *Contra College* will be two days long: Saturday and Sunday, 23-24 January 2016. There will be 10.5 hours of teaching sessions and 6 hours of regular contra dancing at the Saturday evening and special Sunday evening dances. The College will be held at the First United Methodist Church in Palo Alto, California (625 Hamilton Avenue, in the same hall where the Palo Alto Contra is held).

The schedule :

Saturday, 8:30 am	Sign in
Saturday, 9:00 am	Opening of the college
Saturday, until 5:30 pm	Five teaching sessions on, including the sessions on music, dance and waltzing. Lunch is provided.
Saturday, 5:30 pm to 7:15 pm	Callers’ Workshop (separate registration required). Callers of all levels of experience are welcome.
Saturday, 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm	Regular Palo Alto Contra Dance (free for <i>Contra College</i> students).
Sunday, 11:00 am to 12:00 pm	Lunch (provided) with discussions and reflections
Sunday, 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm	Two teaching sessions
Sunday, 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm	Contra College Grad Dance (open to the public, free for <i>Contra College</i> students).

This year we have an exceptional staff of teachers and musicians:

Eric Black, who co-led the 2014 Fall College, will be returning this year as the lead teacher-caller. He began contra & square dancing in the mid-1970s, and started calling dances in 1982 in the New England style. Eric has written several dozen dances, and has taught and called contras and squares in nearly all 50 states plus Washington DC and the Virgin Islands (and several other countries).

Susan Petrick, who was the first *Contra College* teacher in 2010 and has been a leader or guest caller for most of the Colleges since, will be teaching the Waltz session (a mainstay at previous colleges), leading a Callers’ workshop, and will be the lead caller for the Contra College Grad Dance on Sunday evening. She has been calling for fourteen years, and has been steadily gaining national prominence in the contra dance world. She strives to program interesting, varied dances with great flow, and to teach them clearly and concisely.

Jim Oakden, who has graced many previous Contra Colleges, will be teaching a session on how to hear and dance to contra music. Jim offers an insightful sharing of how integral the music (and musicians) are for giving that great live sound, but how the music and phrasing of the music can help dancers (and callers) keep track of where they are in the dance, and how it can inspire movements and nuances within the dance.

On Saturday, **Jim Oakden** and **Ben Schrieber** will team up to provide music for all five of the teaching session

On Sunday, **Debra Tayleur** and **Anne Goess** will team up to provide music for the two teaching sessions

The music for the *Contra College* Grad Dance (Sunday, 4-7 pm), will be provided by **Treble Maker (Debra Tayleur, Anne Goess, Chip Curry)**. **Susan Petrick** will call, with guest calling by graduates of the Callers’ Workshop.

For more information: write to info@ContraCollege.com or visit bacds.org/cc or contracollege.com.

This year’s Contra College will build on a strong tradition of learning of how to be a better contra dancer. This learning takes many forms, from teachers’ instructions to practical exercises and discussions. It is our goal that each attendee, from the newest to most experienced dancer, have the opportunity to gain skills that enable him or her to better enjoy the dance and enrich of the dance community.



Hey Days English Dance and Music Week!

By Brooke Friendly

It's not too soon to start planning your summer! Here are some of the reasons you will want to put **July 30-August 6, 2016**—Hey Days English Dance and Music Week—on your calendar (note the earlier time just for this year).

Talented Dance Staff

Popular caller **Joseph Pimentel** (TX) combines clear teaching, discriminating taste in dances, and respect for tradition. Joseph has published two books of dances—The Cardinal Collection and The Goldcrest Collection. The latter has a companion CD featuring Goldcrest, who will also be at Hey Days. **David Millstone** (MA) is known for his clear and supportive teaching style, the breadth of his repertoire, his sense of humor, and his ability to pick dances that offer the right level of challenge for all audiences. Our program director, **Mary Devlin** (OR), has called dances, taught workshops, and appeared at festivals and dance camps throughout the US and in Canada and Europe. She has been program director for two CDSS English-American Weeks at Pinewoods, for two BACDS English Dance & Music Weeks at Mendocino, and for the first two years of Hey Days.

In addition to teaching ECD, **David Millstone** will also lead a square dance class. He coordinates the Square Dance History Project, a major initiative that is building a digital library—moving images, audio clips, photographs, and text—exploring all different styles, past and present, of square dance.



Inspiring Musicians

Shira Kammen (CA), a multi-instrumentalist (primarily violin, vielle, and viola) and vocalist, has spent most of her life exploring the worlds of early and traditional music. A member of the band *Roguery*, she is a favorite at dance camps and events around the country.

Three seasoned musicians of national reputation and steeped in the folk dance traditions of Appalachia, New England, and the British Isles come together to form the band **Goldcrest**. **Dave Wiesler** (DE) has built a national reputation for his rhythmic and innovative piano playing. At home in a huge range of styles, he plays for concerts and dances of many sorts, and has composed many popular country dance tunes.

Paul Oorts (MD) is in demand for his world rhythms, creative improvisations and stylistic versatility. He plays an array of instruments, including mandolin, banjo, cittern, musette accordion, and harp guitar. **Daron Douglas** (LA) is a captivating fiddler for American and English dance traditions internationally. Also a member of the band Foxfire, she combines the precision and tone of a classical violinist with the energy and soul of an Appalachian fiddler.

Fine Companions is a newly formed band from Portland OR. **Betsy Branch** has been a mainstay of the Portland dance community for many years with her exuberant dance fiddling. She is the associate music director of Portland's Revels theater company and their house fiddler. **Erik Weberg** plays flutes, harmonicas, and bombardes (yes, plural). He is a regular musician at English country dances in Portland, and he organizes and plays for a monthly contra dance with the band Joyride. **Lisa Scott** is an accomplished pianist and teacher. Her sensitivity to dance rhythms and her lyrical style make her music a joy for dancers. Since moving to Portland, **Bill Tomczak** plays clarinet, saxophone, and percussion with *Fine Companions* and *The Quarks* for both English country and contra dance. He is also a member of the contra dance band *Latter Day Lizards* and has recorded with BLT, Wild Asparagus and Yankee Ingenuity.

Singing

We will have two singing classes and other opportunities for singing throughout the week. **Fred Todt** (OH) will lead a Shape Note singing. Fred inspires experienced and reluctant singers alike to raise their voices in boisterous and joyful song. His comfortable confidence, strong voice, and gentle guidance quickly have everyone singing and smiling. **Shira Kammen** will teach one of her popular singing sessions.

Daily Schedule—So Many Great Things to Choose From

In addition to a wide range of English country dance classes, we will have a square dance class and a caller's workshop. Off the dance floor, you can join **Dan Kozloff** (CA) for an Intro to Acting class. And, of course, we will have a full complement of music workshops for all levels, including a band workshop, a music improv session, a music theory class, and more. Special one-day workshops will give you concentrated instruction from our talented staff.

Welcoming Community

We will have many chances for additional fun outside the workshop schedule, including pool parties, a plethora of late-night dancing and jamming opportunities, and a daily Gathering featuring staff and camper performances, stories, jokes, and more. We will have a few planned pre-dinner and post-dance parties and lots of room for camper-led events and activities. All callers and musicians may participate in Campers Night. We also encourage callers and musicians to help create late-night dance and music parties.

Fabulous Location

The Bishop's Ranch in Sonoma County has comfortable accommodations, delicious meals in a spacious dining hall, beautiful views, a wonderful pool to cool off in, hiking trails, and local vineyards to visit. The air-conditioned main dance hall is lovely, with high ceilings and lots of natural light.

Check out the website (www.bacds.org/heydays) to get details now and a registration form (available in January 2016). We hope to dance, sing, and play with you at camp!



The President's Corner



From the President: It's time again to talk about bringing more people into our dance community. Newcomers are a vital part of the life of the community. They bring new energy, new ideas, and new volunteers to help carry on the traditions that we love. We know that. We do a very good job of welcoming newcomers into our dances now. But we really should be doing more.

Ten or twelve years ago, we were really concerned about the future of our dance community. Attendance was down; the average age of our dancers was slowly increasing; and we were losing more dancers to attrition (age, illness, moving away, turning to other ways of life ...). We were worried.

We took action. And for the most part, we succeeded.

We did a *lot* to remind ourselves to be more welcoming and helpful to newcomers. This has worked really well. The dances in the San Francisco Bay Area are some of the most friendly and welcoming in the country. Newcomers are welcomed and asked to dance (sometimes there is even competition for them). Beginners are guided (mostly gently) until they get the feel of the dance. We have newcomers' orientation classes before most of our regular dances; and we almost always include welcome and appreciation for newcomers into our announcements. This is working *really well*. It means that most of the people who come to our dances for the first time feel welcomed and taken care of and have a good time.

Reality check: just because someone comes to a dance and has a good time does not mean we've recruited a new dancer into the community. There's a world of difference between having an evening of fun and making room in your crowded life for coming back to do it again week after week. So we can consider that only a fraction of the people we welcome into our dance will come back regularly. But the rest will at least remember the fun, and may pass the word along to others.

We've also done things to make our dances more appealing. Just organizing committees to manage the dances (instead of leaving the whole series in the hands of one person) is helpful. With more people to help, we can try out more ideas and do more interesting things. And we've reached out to young people by offering special youth prices at regular dances and scholarships to our camps and weekends. Note that offering special deals is not enough, though. You also have to get the word out. The youth prices at regular dances don't work unless somebody goes out to where the young people are and tells them that they get a special deal. The youth scholarships to camp don't work unless someone takes the time to sit down and talk to our young dancers and invite them to apply. Outreach is critical, and we need to be doing more.

Another thing we should be looking at is how the dance traditions need to change for the new generation. *Change? Really?* I thought we were *preserving* traditions. We are, but a tradition is preserved only as long as it is remembered. We don't dance the way our parents did, or our grandparents, or even the way we ourselves did twenty years ago. Traditions change, and each generation makes the tradition its own by adding its distinctive flair. What seems to be happening in the contra world for the younger generation (at least in the Bay Area) is the movement toward gender-free dancing. All it takes is a visit to the *Circle Left* dance on second Fridays in Oakland to see what I mean. This is a really energetic, enthusiastic, and young crowd, and it feels like the future to me. Our Wednesday Berkeley Contra is also drifting toward being a gender-free dance, and perhaps the others will follow in time.

English dance is harder to make attractive to the younger generation. English dance has a reputation for being slow and boring and having people frown on adding flourishes. This is a misconception, but it is a misconception that has stuck and become part of the dance tradition. Perhaps it was because the people who rediscovered and revived ECD in the early 20th century imagined that their ancestors of 100 or 200 years earlier were as stiff and formal and un-demonstrative as they themselves were aspiring to be in their post-Victorian era. There is, indeed, a lovely elegance and grace about some of the slower English dances, with long lingering looks and a special intensity. There is also plenty of liveliness and high-stepping in the tradition that was overlooked in the first revival. And flourishes are welcome at any time if they don't break the pattern of the dance. Unless we can explain this to young people and get them interested, however, we may be continuing to populate our English dance community with aging Contra dancers. There is hope: a movement in England (of all places) called "Zesty Playford" (see article below) that repackages the ECD tradition in an up-tempo style that encourages playfulness. If anyone is interested in organizing a Zesty Playford dance series here, please let me know.

The last thing I want to leave you with is a reminder that the best recruiting tool for the dance community is our network of friends. Ask your friends to come dance with you. Find occasions to invite people. Celebrate your birthday (or graduation or whatever) at a dance. Keep spreading the word that dancing is fun and rewarding and worth coming back for. And just keep dancing. Spread the Joy.

~ Jens Dill, BACDS President, bacds-president@bacds.org

The Zesty Playford Manifesto

by Rhodri Davies

- Zesty Playford is fun — you are allowed to enjoy yourself
- Zesty Playford must be DANCED: slip circles and skip steps are correct. The only excuse for dancing like you need a hip replacement is to need a hip replacement.
- Zesty Playford is for the young at heart and light of foot of all ages.
- At a Zesty Playford dance you dance with different people and make sure that everyone gets a chance to dance.
- At a Zesty Playford dance you are allowed to be enthusiastic.
- At a Zesty Playford dance you are allowed to improvise provided you end up in the right place — Playford is not sacred.
- Cecil Sharp was good, but not always right.
- Playford has some wonderful tunes and dances: make the most of them and enjoy yourself.
- Playford also has some boring dances — just because it was in Playford does not mean it will be included in a Zesty Playford dance.
- Playford may originally have been upper class, but it was never proper: "unchaste kisses....wanton compliments...lust-provoking attire".
- Playford music is allowed to be loud and lively.
- Playford dancers are allowed to be loud and lively.
- Zesty Playford should bring a smile to your face — if you can't manage that wear a funny mask.

Rhodri Davies coined the term "Zesty Playford" for workshops at Chippenham Folk Festival in 2011. There is quite a bit more information about it on Colin Hume's web site: colinhume.com/dezesty.htm.

What is “Gender-Free” Dance, Anyway?

This is for those people who have not been to a “gender-free” dance and are kind of wondering how different it is from the kind of dance they are used to and whether they will feel comfortable there. The answer is: not very different at all, and even more fun. The main difference, of course, is that at a “gender-free” dance we try very hard not to link dance roles to sex roles. Anyone can dance with anyone, and anyone can choose to line up on either side of the dance and dance either role, or even change roles partway through the dance. This can take a little getting used to, if you are used to using someone’s sex as a cue to decide what role they are dancing. But it’s not hard to get over. Just adopt the attitude that you will dance with whoever is there in front of you.

The most obvious difference is in the terminology. A gender-free dance needs some other way to label the dance roles than calling them “ladies” and “gents,” or “men” and “women.” Over the years, there has been a lot of discussion and back-and-forth over the best set of terms to use. Right now, here in the Bay Area, we seem to have settled on a convention that works. “Ravens” take the traditional “Ladies” role, and “Larks” take the traditional “Gents” role. The mnemonic is pretty easy to remember. When you line up for an improper dance, or face up the hall when lined up for a proper dance, or come out of a swing, the **R**aven is on the **R**ight and the **L**ark is on the **L**eft. And “Ravens” and “Larks” have the same number of syllables as the corresponding “Ladies” and “Gents” or “Women” and “Men,” so the callers do not have to learn new cadences.

Now you know all you need to know, except for the big secret. A gender-free dance doesn’t really look or feel much different from a regular dance. Yes, you have the freedom to choose any dance partner you want, and to dance the role you prefer to dance, but that means that most of the time people choose a partner of the opposite sex and most of the time they dance the role they are comfortable with. It looks very much like a traditional dance, especially when you remember that even in the “traditional” dances, we still have same-sex couples any time the gender balance gets out of kilter, and that there are plenty of young whippersnappers who change roles and fool around anyway. The real difference with the gender-free dance is the sense of freedom. You are not tied to a role by your sex, but you can always dance the role you want.

Dance History Trivia: What is this “Playford” Thing?

Ever wonder how the word “Playford” became a near-synonym for English Country Dance? It was a sound commercial decision at the time. John Playford was a publisher in London in the 1650s. This was an age when the publishing industry was seeing the kind of growth we remember from the dot com boom. Printing was cheap and easy, and becoming widespread. And ordinary people were becoming wealthy enough to afford to spend money on books. If you picked the right niche market, and pointed your printing presses at it, you could just rake in the money, or so it seemed. At any rate, John Playford published “The English Dancing Master” in 1651. It was the first mass-market book of dance instructions published in England, and it was a success. Playford and his successors continued to publish the Dancing Master until 1728. When Cecil Sharp and the English Folklore Society revived ECD in the early 20th century, they started with Playford’s books as their oldest source material. Nobody knows if John Playford ever danced, or ever taught dancing himself, but his name lives on.

Volunteer Thanks

- ♪ Thanks to the *Fall Frolick* Committee for producing another splendid weekend of dance.
- ♪ Thanks to the *Fall Ball* Committee; the Ball was delightful.
- ♪ Thanks to *Chris Knepper* and *Stacey Carr* for organizing the *No Snow Ball* again. They had a lot of things that had to be changed this time around, and they ended up making it look like it was all planned that way from the start.
- ♪ Thanks to *David Buesch* for reviving and re-organizing *Contra College*. He’s put together an awesome program in a short time. I’m thinking about going back to school.
- ♪ Thanks to *George Nesbitt* for taking on the issues with the floor at Christ Church Berkeley. George has done wonders to make the floor more danceable, and has agreed to be the lead contractor for the next floor refinishing (soon).
- ♪ Thanks to *Claire Takemori* for taking on a whole bunch of tasks for BACDS and for TDOGS. Claire is also working on building an outreach program to bring more college students into our dances. If you have ideas or want to help her, let her know.
- ♪ Thanks to *Laura Stillman* for taking on the duties of food manager at the San Francisco Contra. She’s doing it with enthusiasm and dedication, with an interest in healthier snacks and making the series greener. She is someone who will always step up to the challenge when something extra is needed, and has a great, positive, can do attitude. She is also considering making the benefit dance for the Nepalese hospital into an annual event. I’m sure she’ll want help.
- ♪ Thanks to *Linda Roy*, who is doing the dinner-before-dance announcements for the Palo Alto English Dance, managing the Meetup group for the San Jose Dance, and with several others, helping *Joyce Cooper* manage the San Jose dance.
- ♪ Thanks to *Lise Dyckman* for taking on the job of programming the Palo Alto English Dance.
- ♪ Thanks to *Stephen Connelly* for his tireless work balancing the books for *Balance the Bay* and *Spring Fever*. Stephen has a new consulting job, and may need someone else to take over his volunteer work.
- ♪ Thanks to *Shelby Solomon* and the *Family Week* Committee for the hard work at the last minute to find a temporary site for Family Week this summer.
- ♪ Thanks to *Jim Oakden* who came offstage (literally) to take over as treasurer for *Fall Ball*, and to *Lori Honzik* who agreed to come on as treasurer for *Fall Frolick*, so that *Mary Luckhardt* can take over as BACDS Treasurer. Oh, and Thanks to Mary for taking on that job.
- ♪ Thanks to *Laura Rice Hall* for her hard work managing the Berkeley Wednesday Contra (where she doesn’t even dance)
- ♪ Thanks to all the invisible volunteers who keep things going behind the scenes.
- ♪ I can’t possibly remember all the people who need to be thanked for their efforts. If I fail to mention someone, let me know, and I’ll add them next time. I can’t even fit everyone in, because of all the events they create.

Morris Winter Traditions Day of Dance

Saturday, January 23, 2016, Sunnyvale and Mountain View

Various Morris teams from the Bay area and Southern California will present Border Morris, Molly, sword dancing and perhaps a mummies' play near Murphy Street in downtown Sunnyvale, and at the CPA and Caltrain station in Mountain View. Check the Mad Molly Morris Facebook page for times and exact locations.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, Dec 6	No Snow Ball	<i>Rachel Wallace, Jean Gorrindo with Maivish, Tunestone</i>
Friday, Dec 18	Palo Alto English Holiday Party	<i>Sharon Green with Nonesuch Country Dance Players</i>
Friday, Dec 18	Santa Rosa Contra Holiday Gala (NBCDS)	<i>Kelsey Hartman with the WiNgNuts</i>
Saturday, Dec 26	Berkeley English Boxing Day Party	<i>Cavalcade of Callers</i>
Tues-Sun, Dec 29-Jan 3	Camp Harmony	(SFFMC)
Thursday, Dec 31	Palo Alto New Years' Eve Contra	<i>Lynn Ackerson with StringFire</i>
Thursday, Dec 31	Mill Valley New Years' Eve Contra (NBCDS)	<i>Susan Pleck w/ Ben Schrieber, Ashley Broder, Jeff Spero</i>
Thursday, Dec 31	Sacramento New Years' Eve Contra (SCDS)	<i>Susan Petrick with the Whoots</i>
Friday, January 1	Palo Alto English New Years' Day party	<i>Alan Winston and Lise Dyckman</i>
Friday, January 1	Santa Rosa New Years' Day Contra (NBCDS)	<i>Susan Pleck w/ Ben Schrieber, Ashley Broder, Jeff Spero</i>
Saturday, January 2	Special San Francisco Contra	special band: Ben Schrieber, Ashley Broder, Jeff Spero
Wednesday, January 6	Special Berkeley Contra	<i>Harris Lapiroff w/ Audrey Knuth, Dave Cory, Erik Hoffman</i>
Wednesday, January 13	Intro to English Dance workshop	at 6:45, before the Berkeley English Dance
Fri-Sun, Jan 15-17	Contra Carnivale (CCCDS)	<i>Bob Isaacs, Nils Fredland, Susan Michaels</i>
Sat-Sun, Jan 23-24	Contra College	<i>Eric Black, Susan Petrick, Jim Oakden</i>
Saturday, January 23	Contra College callers' workshop	<i>Susan Petrick, 5:30 pm</i>
Saturday, January 23	Winter Traditions Day of Dance	Morris Dancing in Sunnyvale and Mountain View
Sunday, Jan 24	Contra College Grad Dance	<i>Susan Petrick with the Treble Makers, 4-7 pm.</i>
Sunday, February 14	Contra Cruz (double-length) (TDSC)	<i>Andy Wilson w/ BLAM!, Susan Petrick w/ Wayside</i>
Saturday, February 20	English Dance Workshop	<i>Bruce Hamilton, 2-5 pm</i>
Wenesday, February 24	Tunes Jam	at 6:45, before the Berkeley English Dance
Sunday, February 28	Playford Ball Workshop (Peninsula)	<i>Bruce Hamilton</i>
Wednesday, March 2	Special Berkeley Contra	<i>Erik Hoffman with Triple A Plus</i>
Saturday, March 5	Playford Ball Workshop (East Bay)	<i>David Newitt</i>
Fri-Sun, March 11-13	Spring Fever Dance Weekend	<i>Gaye Fifer, Adina Gordon, Nikki Herbst, and more</i>
Sunday, March 13	Special San Francisco Contra	<i>Gaye Fifer with Triple A Plus</i>
Monday, March 14	Special Palo Alto Contra	<i>Adina Gordon with Triple A Plus</i>
Saturday, March 19	Techno Contra at San Francisco	<i>Ethan Hummel with DJ Balance and Swing</i>
Sunday, March 20	Playford Ball Workshop (Sacramento)	<i>Alisa Dodson</i>
Wednesday, March 23	Experienced English Dance Workshop	<i>Nikki Herbst, at 6:45, before the Berkeley English Dance</i>
Wednesday, March 23	Special Berkeley English	<i>Nikki Herbst</i>
Friday, April 1	Playford Ball Rehearsal	<i>Cavalcade of callers with Bangers & Mash</i>
Saturday, April 2	Playford Ball	<i>Lise Dyckman</i>
Sunday, April 3	Playford Brunch	at the home of Jens Dill
?	Epicenter Dance Weekend (NBCDS)	(Website not up at press time)
Fri-Sun, April 8-10	Queer Contra Dance Camp	<i>Frannie Marr, Kalia Kliban with the Syncopaths</i>
Sunday, May 1	May Day (6 am)	<i>Dance the sun up with Bay Area Morris dancers</i>
Sun-Fri, June 26-July 1	American Dance and Music Week	TBA
Friday, July 1	Post-Amweek Contra in Palo Alto	<i>American Week Staff</i>
Sun-Fri, July 3-8	BACDS Family Dance Week	TBA
Sat-Sat, July 30-Aug 6	English Dance and Music Week	<i>Joseph Pimentel, David Millstone, Mary Devlin</i>

See bacds.org for more information. For events sponsored by our neighbors, see nbcds.org (NBCDS), sactocds.org (SCDS), sffmc.org (SFFMC), santacruzdance.org (TDSC), montereycdc.webs.com (MCDC), cccds.org (CCCDS), haywardcontradance.org (TDOGS), lcfld.org/sf (QCD)

This issue was edited by Chris Folger and Jens Dill. Send corrections to TheDancer@bacds.org. Deadline for the Spring *Dancer*: Feb. 20, 2016. Send submissions to TheDancer@bacds.org. Please join the conversation.