



Bay Area Country Dancer

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www.bacds.org

Line up for BACDS American Dance & Music Week!

by Eric Black

AmWeek starts Sunday July 2, and there's still room at camp for YOU. See <http://AmWeek.org>.

Since 1982, hundreds (more than 2000) people have enjoyed AmWeek and to this day many say that attending camp was one of the most meaningful dance and music experiences they've had. **Come see what you've been missing.** Dance camp is especially valuable to new dancers! If you're new to contra dance, **don't** for a second think that you have to have lots of experience to attend dance camp. Dancing is a language, and the best way to learn any language is by immersion; come immerse yourself in music & dance in the redwoods!

AmWeek is unique among dance camps; it's the only camp in the US with ALL these features:

- residential, includes room & board (no couch surfing, no commuting to a hotel, no extra \$\$ for meals)
- Sunday-Friday schedule is more relaxing than a jam-packed weekend; you return home relaxed and refreshed instead of needing a day off to recover
- time to talk to new friends for longer than 32 bars, and actually get to know them
- small, intimate workshops with some of the best dance musicians in the country
- tune writing, dance choreography, craft workshops every day
- the musicians' track is just as prominent as the dancers' schedule; dance musician workshops even during the evening dances
- easy driving distance from the entire SF Bay Area
- only \$695 for the full program, room & board!



Complete information and online registration is at <http://AmWeek.org>, or pick up a brochure at a dance and mail in the form. And get ready for one of the best dance & music experiences you'll ever enjoy.

This is the 8th year that Eric Black has been AmWeek Manager or Co-Manager, and it's his last year to be doing it. A new management team is needed to take the reins for next year. Sad to say, if no one steps up **this might be the last year for AmWeek.** **YOU could be the next team** to put your own style on AmWeek, and bring new energy and a new viewpoint to this continuing tradition.

Hands Four from the top!

New Dance Prices Start on July 1, 2017!

By Carlton Keedy

Things were different 16 years ago. Among other things, Enron hadn't filed for bankruptcy yet, Apple hadn't introduced the iPod yet (to say nothing of the now 10-year-old iPhone), Facebook and Twitter didn't exist yet, and I was a fourth-grader in rural Iowa. It was also about 16 years ago that the BACDS most recently increased admission prices for our dances. Since then, prices for a variety of things have risen ever so slightly, so the Board voted at its May meeting to raise prices again. This brings us to a total of two price increases in the past 22 years. At this rate, you won't see another article like this for 11 years. Enjoy it while it lasts!

Our new prices go into effect on July 1, 2017, the beginning of the next quarter. Prices for all dances (both on weekdays and on weekends) will rise to \$10 for members, \$12 for nonmembers, \$6 for students and low-income dancers, and \$20 for supporters—those who are interested in and able to contribute more financially for the community's benefit. As always, we encourage people to pay whatever they can if these prices strain budgets. We want to share the joy of music and dance with everyone we can, regardless of financial circumstances.

Annual membership fees will remain \$25 for individuals, \$40 for families and joint memberships (two adults sharing a mailing address), and \$20 for children and students. What good is a price increase? Most important, dance admission prices are how we pay the musicians, callers, and sound technicians who are vital to our community. They receive 60% of the money paid at the door, so this long-overdue change supports them directly. If a dance brings in less than a certain amount, the musicians, caller, and sound person receive a guaranteed minimum amount. The Board may also increase these minimums in the future, but such increases won't be accompanied by another increase in prices.

The other 40% of admission payments go to various things whose costs have risen over the years, such as hall rent, maintenance, insurance, printing and mailing for publicity, and a part-time bookkeeper who helps manage our finances. (We love you, Mary!)

Of course, paying a couple more dollars at a dance isn't the only way—and perhaps not even the most valuable way—to support our community. Our dances are organized and run on the power of volunteerism, so there's always room for more people to lend a hand in any of a number of ways. (I'm not even getting a nickel for typing all of these words!) Just say you'd like to help and we'll find the perfect task for your mix of skills and desired time commitment.

The President's Corner



From the President: Every May, the BACDS Board of Directors comes up for re-election. It's not a big production; you don't see mailings to the BACDS membership with calls for nominations, and more mailings with slates of candidates and return envelopes for voting. The corporate Bylaws explicitly state that "the corporation has no members" and that the people who elect the new Board of Directors each year are the members of the outgoing Board. It was set up this way, presumably, to save us the organizational hassle and expense of mailing out ballots to the membership every year (and, most likely, having the majority of them not returned).

So what happens every spring is that the current Board members take stock of their fellow dancers, trying to consider which ones will be likely to be willing and able to join the Board. We ask them, most decline, but we always seem to find enough candidates to at least bring the Board beyond the minimum number required by the Bylaws. We even have had years when we've had more candidates than vacancies, so the vote actually becomes a significant event. This year, we went through the same process, and the number of new candidates we found to fill the vacancies on the Board was exactly zero. We went through the elections anyway, re-electing those Directors who are still available to serve.

But we're in a bit of a tight spot. The Bylaws state that the number of directors shall be no less than 11 and no more than 15. The Board has been shrinking a bit due to people moving away or passing away, and we were already down to 11 Directors before the election. We had two people who did not stand for re-election; so the newly elected Board has only 10 Directors, one short of the requirement. All is not lost; the Bylaws also empower the Board to fill any vacancies. So watch out: election season is not over, and we may be asking you to join us.

Give it some thought. It's not a huge commitment unless you want it to be. The only absolute requirement for Board members is that they attend seven of the ten Board meetings each year. These are customarily held on the third Thursday of the month; so there is a secondary requirement implied: that you can free up third Thursday evenings on your calendar for most of the year. You are not otherwise obligated to do anything in particular, although just being on the Board puts you in a position to volunteer to do as much as you are willing to do.

Board meetings are pretty congenial and smoothly-run, and have been for at least the past 10 years. You get fed before the meeting (we usually have Chinese takeout delivered). We have a very strict practice of starting and ending on time; we've seldom gone even 10 minutes over the scheduled end time of 10 pm. You get to be involved in shaping the governance and policies of an organization that is promoting activities you love. What could be better? It seems a fair exchange for a couple of hours of your time each month. If you love what we do, and care that we continue to do it, please step forward and join the Board. We need at least one more person, and have room for as many as five.

This may sound a lot like what I wrote in my last President's Letter in March. Then I was writing about recruiting help for dance series managers. Now I'm looking for volunteers for the Board. It's a symptom of a larger problem. There is too much volunteer work being done by too few volunteers, leading to overload and burnout.

This is serious. Dance events that we have been enjoying for years are scaling back or shutting down. The *Spring Fever* Dance Weekend did not happen in 2017 because no one came forward to take charge of the committee when the 2016 leadership stepped down due to burnout. No one came forward for 2018, either, and we lost our regular slot with Monte Toyon for that weekend in March. The *Fall Ball* is on the same track; the leadership from 2016 stepped down due to burnout. So far no one has stepped up. The chair of *American Dance and Music Week*, Eric Black, is stepping down. Unless someone takes the reins, that camp will close as well. Outside of BACDS, we've lost the Queer Contra Dance and nearly lost the Hayward Contra Dance. There was some interest in keeping the *Twelve-Hour Twirl* going, but that committee was not willing to start a new hall search when they found that the usual date was not available.

I'm not trying to paint a gloomy picture that running a dance weekend, camp, or other event automatically leads to burnout. All of these burnouts occurred after the same leadership had been successfully running the event for something on the order of 8 to 10 years, which is a long time for the same people to be doing the same things. The events that tend to keep going, like the *Playford Ball* and *English Dance and Music Week*, tend to actively recruit large committees and rotate the leadership duties every year or two. What we need is a willingness for new leaders to come up and take the load for a short time while the old leadership still has the energy left to help out.

It's not just the big things, like camps and weekends. There are lots of small tasks that have been concentrating in the hands of our few core volunteers, because we just aren't good enough at getting the word out that we need help. There's a whole list of tasks elsewhere in this newsletter waiting for people to step up and do them. Please help.

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

Volunteer Thanks

- ♪ Thanks to the two Board members who are stepping down after serving with distinction. *Clara Stefanov-Wagner* and *Cat Fox* have both made strong contributions to the Board discussions on governance and policy. Clara led and Cat strongly assisted the movement to create a Dancer Safety Committee and develop a Code of Conduct. We will miss them both.
- ♪ Thanks in advance to whoever steps forward to fill the vacancies on the Board left by Clara and Cat. We need at least one more person, and can accept up to five.
- ♪ Thanks to our continuing Board members: *Alan Winston*, *Carlton Keedy*, *Eric Black*, *Jens Dill*, *Kevin Goess*, *Mary Tabor*, *Sharon Green*, *Sharyn Peterson*, *Scott Johnson*, *Yoyo Zhou*. Special thanks to Kevin, who has volunteered to be Secretary, and to *Mary Luckhardt*, who is the Treasurer and attends Board meetings although she is not on the Board.
- ♪ Thanks to *Shirley Worth* for all her work running the Publicity Committee, which takes care of our quarterly flyer mailings. Shirley continued to do the job remotely even after moving to Seattle, but she's had to step down due to her new task: battling cancer. If you want to follow her progress, you can subscribe to her private blog at shirleydances.wordpress.com.
- ♪ Thanks to *Ric Goldman*, our other remote Publicity coordinator. Ric has moved to Portland, Oregon, but still manages the E-pubs list, the online publication of our publicity flyers. He's also still helping keep the BACDS website running.

smoothly, and still contributing ideas and commentary to our community. If you want to thank him in person, he'll be calling the San Francisco English dance on July 8 and the Hayward Contra on August 23.

- ♪ Thanks to *Rachel and Mark McClintick*, who came over and helped put away the bedding we loaned to Queer Camp. Thanks also to *Alan Kline* and *Bex Clark* for collecting, washing, and returning the bedding.
- ♪ Thanks to *George Nesbitt*, who continues to help us by applying his building-trades expertise to keeping our dance floors in good shape and our dance halls properly ventilated. George also one of our carpool organizers.
- ♪ Thanks to *Charlie Fenton* for being persistent in keeping us on track for improving the ventilation at Christ Church Berkeley for the Wednesday dances.
- ♪ Thanks to all of our carpool organizers: *George Nesbitt*, *Jack Engstrom*, *Ed Severinghaus*, *Mary Luckhardt*, *Jens Dill*, and more. It's so much easier and more fun to carpool to dances, and better for parking, too.
- ♪ Thanks to *Larens Emmanuel*, who does most of the onsite management for the Berkeley Wednesday dances, both English and Contra: As Erik Hoffman says, Larens is "almost always there, from beginning to end."
- ♪ Thanks to *Jens Dill* for bringing the window fans to the San José Contra Dance and figuring out how to rig them to stay in the windows (and to stay at the church so we don't have to bring them every time). Jens also bought and donated two new fans.
- ♪ Thanks to *Ben Schreiber* for designing the volunteer buttons for the South Bay Contra.
- ♪ Thanks to *Diane Duffy* for offering to be the Snack Coordinator for *Balance the Bay*. She's doing this remotely, too, from Arizona.
- ♪ Thanks to the new leadership of the *Balance the Bay* Committee, for picking up the reins and moving forward: *Yoyo Zhou*, *Claire Matthews*, and *Ray Grott*. Thanks also to the other committee members, *Claire Takemori*, *Peggy Chipkin*, *Bowen Lee*, and *Jens Dill* (who is very relieved not to be chair or co-chair this year).
- ♪ 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.

Things *You* can do to help – big and small

Here is a list of jobs looking for people to volunteer to do them. Many of them are already being done, by people who are also doing too many other things for us. It will be easier for all of us if we can spread these jobs out and give everyone who wants to contribute a chance to do so. Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization.

1. **Join the Board of Directors.** We have openings for up to five (and a requirement for at least one) new Board members. It's not a lot of work: you only need to show up for 7 of 10 meetings a year (3 hours on a 3rd Thursday evening), and vote when we have something to vote on. There are perks: you get fed dinner before the meeting; you get preference for camp admissions when there is a lottery, and you get the inside scoop on what is happening, and a chance to direct it where *you* want it to go.
2. **Help with Finances.** In prior years, we've had three financial officers: the Treasurer, who manages the overall accounting; the Dance Coordinator, who collects the dance sheets and payments from the regular dance series; and the Membership Coordinator, who handles memberships. All three of these offices are currently held by the same person, Mary Luckhardt, who is *very* good at what she does. But Mary is good at *everything* she does, and she does all this and more. We'd like to make sure she doesn't burn out. If you have the inclination and accounting skills to do this kind of work, please talk to Mary to see if there is a way you can help.
3. **Coordinate Flyer Mailings.** This is also a pretty easy job. Every three months (in February, May, August, and November), you send out requests to all dance organizers (we have a mailing list) asking if they want to put a flyer in the next quarter's mailing. You collect the source documents (usually PDF files), review and organize them, and send the printing order to the copy center (Krishna Copy in Berkeley). Most of the work happens in the last week of the month, just before the mailing party on the first Saturday of the next month.
4. **Pick up the Flyers.** This is another thing Mary Luckhardt does. If you can get to Krishna Copy on the Friday afternoon before the mailing party (usually the first Saturday in April, June, September, and December) and then bring the flyers to the mailing party, then Mary doesn't have to do it.
5. **Coordinate E-Pubs.** Ric Goldman is doing this remotely, from Oregon. I think he's happy to do it, but he may be interested in passing the work onto someone local. If you are interested, talk to him about it.
6. **Coordinate Outreach.** This is different from the Publicity mailings, which go to people who are already on our list. The Outreach coordinator tries to figure out how to publicize our dances to people who don't already know about them. We haven't had an Outreach coordinator in years.
7. **Help Manage a Dance.** Most of our big dances now have management teams. This means that if you volunteer to manage a dance, you don't have to manage them all. You can pick and choose, and limit yourself to one a quarter. Some dances also split the job into opening and closing managers.
8. **Help Manage Snacks for a Dance.** Same deal. If we have more than one person on the team, you only have to do this once in a while.
9. **Learn to run the Sound Board.** We always need more people to learn to run the sound board for our dances. If you are interested, talk to the sound tech at the next dance you attend. Chances are you will be welcomed with open arms.
10. **Help out at a Dance.** Most of you do this pretty well, but sometimes we have to call out for door sitters or people to put out or clean up snacks. Help is especially welcome before a dance (setting up the hall, sweeping the floor, assisting with the orientation lesson) and after (cleaning and closing the hall).
11. **Arrange Carpools.** Getting to dances can involve a lot of time in traffic these days. It's a lot more fun to have other people with you. Talk to your friends about carpooling. Set up a meeting place, and make it work!

12. **Keep track of Waldo.** This is another of Mary Luckhardt's small tasks that can be handed off. The badge maker that we use to create those camp buttons and so forth is shared by the SF Folk Music Club and used by almost all of our event and dance committees. Someone needs to keep track of who has it now, who gets it next, how many button parts we need to order for the next event, and actually take charge of ordering the parts. We did get someone to take this job some time back, and she did it well, but then she moved away, and Mary got the job back.
13. **Join a Committee.** We have committees to plan and run all of our events and our dance series. Pick the event you like best, or are most committed to, and join the committee. There are lots of things you can do. You can put in as much or as little time as you like. You do have to take the time to attend meetings and communicate with your fellow committee members. Some of our committees hold their meetings using telephone or Internet conference services, so you don't have to drive all over everywhere to go to meetings.
14. **Chair a Committee.** One reason events die off is that the same person chairs them every year for 8 or 10 years and then decides they don't want to do it any more, but during that time they've made the job so much their own that it's hard for someone else to visualize taking it on. There's a better way. Join the committee (see above) and offer to serve as co-manager or manager-in-training for a year, and then you will be in a position to do the job yourself. Properly done, managing a committee should not be too hard; since you should be recruiting lots of other volunteers and delegating to them. And make sure you arrange to train your replacement.
15. **Help with the Website.** We're upgrading our web platform this summer. Then we're going to start improving the content. If you have ideas or web design skills, we'd like to hear from you.
16. **Promote our Events.** Registrations are way down this year for some of our summer events, such as *American Week* and *Balance the Bay*. Take the time to talk to people at the regular dances you attend. Ask if they are going to attend these events. Tell them how much fun they could have. Hand them a flyer. If they really cannot attend, find out why, and let the committee know what you've learned.
17. **Create your own Event.** If you have an idea for some new event we could sponsor, or co-sponsor, bring a proposal to the Board. We're always on the lookout for new ideas.
18. **Organize a new dance series.** We often have people ask us if we can organize a dance closer to where they live (in Walnut Creek, say, or Pleasanton, or wherever). Yes, we can do it, if a group of volunteers from that area steps forward to form a committee and finds a useable hall. We did it most recently in San José. And it's worth checking out the Danville Grange hall as a possible site for a dance in the San Ramon Valley. Talk to Jens Dill for more details on whom to contact.
19. **Create Artwork.** We often need artwork for logos, T-shirts, and so forth. And we need people to compose clever publicity flyers. If your talents run in this direction, please let us know. We'll find a way to use them.
20. **Write for the Newsletter.** We always welcome interesting and clever articles and columns. We seldom get them. Even filling out the "Upcoming Events" section is a task that could be handed off to someone.
21. **Just Dance (and smile a lot).** Just showing up at our dances is a way of supporting us. If you smile at people and welcome newcomers, that's even better.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, June 10	Mad Robin Ball (NBCDS)	<i>Scott Higgs</i>
Wednesday, June 14	Waltz away your Worries	<i>(before the Berkeley English Dance)</i>
Fri-Sun, June 16-18	Faultline Frolic (NBCDS)	<i>Linsey Dono with Riptide</i>
Saturday, June 24	Special Experienced English	<i>Bob Green with Ladies at Play</i>
Sunday, June 25	Special Hayward Contra	<i>Bob Green with Ladies at Play</i>
Friday, June 30	Special Palo Alto English	<i>Bob Green with Ladies at Play</i>
Friday, June 30	Special San Rafael Contra (NBCDS)	<i>Deb Comly with Joyride</i>
Saturday, July 1	Special San Francisco Contra	<i>Bob Isaacs with Moving Violations</i>
Sun-Fri, July 2-7	American Dance and Music Week	<i>Bob Isaacs, Deb Comly, Moving Violations, Joyride</i>
Friday, July 7	AmWeek Gala in Palo Alto	<i>Bob Isaacs, Deb Comly, Moving Violations, Joyride</i>
Sun-Fri, July 2-7	BACDS Family Week	<i>Susan Michaels, Kalia Kliban, Michael Riemer</i>
Saturday, July 8	Special Palo Alto Contra	<i>Bob Isaacs with Moving Violations</i>
Sunday, July 23	Open Callers' Night at Hayward Contra	Contact erik@erikhoffman.com to call.
Fri-Sun, August 11-13	Balance the Bay	<i>Luke Donforth, Sarah VanNorstrand, Great Bear, Maivish</i>
Sunday, August 13	CounterBalance Contra Dance	<i>Luke Donforth with Great Bear and Maivish</i>
Monday, August 14	Special Palo Alto Contra	<i>Michael Karcher with Great Bear</i>
Saturday, August 19	Special Berkeley Experienced English	<i>Andrew Swaine w/ C. Hancock, J.Jensen, N. McConkey</i>
Sun-Sun, August 20-27	Hey Days English Dance & Music Week	<i>Andrew Swaine, Kalia Kliban, Brooke Friendly</i>
Fri-Sun, Sept 15-17	Echo Summit Dance Camp (SCDS)	<i>Cis Hinkle, Luke Donforth, Syncopaths, Free Raisins</i>
Friday, September 22	Benefit Contra for Camp New Harmony	<i>Kelsey Hartman</i>

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

This issue was edited by Chris Folger and Jens Dill. Send corrections to TheDancer@bacds.org. Deadline for the Fall *Dancer*: August 20, 2017. Send submissions to cjfolger@yahoo.com. Please join the conversation.