



The Folk Dancer

Alumni Newsletter

Fall Edition 2008

Editor: Vickie Austin



Christmas Around the World 2008

CAW 2008 will be held December 5th and 6th at 7:30 p.m. Come join us for our 48th Annual Christmas celebration—the official start to our holiday festivities. The concert promises to be the exciting extravaganza we all expect and enjoy—with new choreographies from Poland, Wales, India (in the Bollywood style) and the good old USA, as well as old favorites including the return of Hopak! The show will also feature surprise guest performers that will knock your socks off.

And don't forget our annual Alumni Reception in between concerts Saturday afternoon (approximate time is 3:30 p.m.) We will gather once again in the Marriott Center after the matinee performance to meet friends and "catch up."

Tickets are on sale now. If you haven't all ready ordered your tickets, you may do so online at byutickets.com or call 801-422-BYU1. The toll-free number is 1-800-322-BYU1.

Performing Arts Company

The Performing Arts Company had the tour of a lifetime this past May as they traveled to Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Belarus and Ukraine. Not only did the group perform in all the major cities of these countries but they had the privilege of performing with several of the top professional and amateur folk dance groups of these countries.

At the top of our list was the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble in Budapest. What a tremendous experience of doing a joint performance with this auspicious group and having the opportunity to



dance jointly with them in their rendition of Szatmari Tancok and they with us in our American finale. You should have seen the Hungarians frantically learning their "chugs" and other basic clogging steps. It was all such great fun and an incredible experience for each of us.



Gabor Mihalyi (Mishi), director of the state ensemble was duly impressed with how well our students acquitted themselves performing Szatmar. So much so, that sometime in the near future he has agreed to come to BYU to choreograph for our ensemble. All of this was made possible through the efforts of our good friend Ervin Varga, director of SLUK, the professional state ensemble of Slovakia and choreographer of BYU's Slovakian suite of dances.



Other groups the folk dancers had an opportunity to perform with included, Lucnica from Slovakia, Promni from Warsaw and Jawor from the Agricultural College in Lublin so many of us have associated with in the past at festivals.

Our ensemble also participated in firesides, workshops and receptions as well as other community celebrations. They spent hours waiting at borders, but also saw many wonderful sites and met numerous remarkable people from all these countries. And—everyone stayed healthy! The Philharmonic, our theater in Minsk, Belarus, was filled to overflowing.

This fall semester the group has all ready had the privilege of working with 91 year old Ada Dziewanowska, Polish expert and choreographer from Milwaukee, Wisconsin and her assistant, Michael Malich (an expert in Serbian dance as well). They have also worked with Jiamin Huang, Tina Shelley, and Johanna Lambert. They have successfully performed in World of Dance, collaborated with Men's Chorus in Homecoming Spectacular and participated in the Dance Division Assembly on October 21st. All this within seven weeks of school while also preparing for Christmas Around the World!



Spring Performing Arts Company



Wow! What an amazing experience it was this year! We did the impossible and performed 88 shows in 6 weeks. The dancers were hardworking and positive through the whole experience. It was a wonderful group of students both on stage and off. Our shows in Utah ranged from Santaquin to Snowville. Snowville was a very memorable experience where we performed at the local school with 25 students plus two other schools (one from two hours away) to make a total of 80 children in the

audience. It was obvious that the children had never seen anything quite like our program before. They were enthralled and so excited. Common comments from children all over were: "I didn't want the show to end", "I want to go to BYU when I grow up and be a dancer", "All the dances were my favorite", and from the principals: "This is the best money that we spend all year."



We were in Nauvoo from June 2-13. We performed every evening on the outdoor stage just east of the Visitors Center. Our audience members came from all over—even from abroad. We had about 700 audience members every evening.

The highlight of our Nauvoo trip surrounded the severe flooding they had just before we left. We were summoned to help sandbag the Nauvoo House which belongs to the Community of Christ church. We helped build a 200 yard levee around the historic site. The students sang as they shoveled sand into sandbags, even as the rain poured down in the middle of the project. We all felt it was such a rewarding experience to be able to help preserve a historic site of common interest and to serve the Community of Christ church and the community of Nauvoo.

Our two weeks in Nauvoo were definitely life changing as we learned about church history from scholars such as Susan Easton Black and felt the special spirit that exists in that beautiful city.



Backup PAC in Review

Our Backup Performance Team was privileged to have Mr. Robert DeWarren come and work with them on Thursday, October 16th. He put the finishing touches on a Kurdish choreography Delynne created two years ago.

Mr. DeWarren and his wife, Jacqueline, recently retired from his position as the Artistic Director of the Sarasota Ballet Company. Robert (born in Uruguay) and Jacqueline (born in France), met in Amsterdam while dancing with the Royal London Ballet in the 50's and early 60's. He collaborated with Rudolf Nureyev in his early career, and other world-renowned ballet dancers throughout Europe. Because of some serious foot problems, he quit dancing and accepted an invitation from the Shah of Iran to document the folk dance of the various tribes in Iran. They planned to stay in Iran for 2-3 years, but ended up falling in love with the people and culture and extended their stay to 11 years. It was such a treat to have them "Persianize" our suite of three dances and share their talents and expertise with us.

ALUMNI CORNER

Alumni Alert: The IFDE is looking for local alumni who would be willing to volunteer their time in helping to maintain the club's website (not the alumni site!). It would require knowledge of website design and upkeep, and the mentoring of current students. If anyone would be willing to serve, please contact Ed Austin at 422-3384 or email edaustin@byu.edu.

Are you missing your folk dance days? Do you still have the desire to leap run run or double toe? If so, contact Colleen West at 422-3104 or email colleen_west@byu.edu. We are looking for enthusiastic alumni who would love to take folk dance into the school system—especially junior high or high school. Of course, elementary grades are great too. There is nothing like sparking their interest while they are young.

Some of our alumni dancers, along with Living Legends, were once again invited to perform in Washington, DC at the Marriott Ranch on October 11th for Church Public Relations. The group travelled with Colleen West and Shane Wright. They performed to a small but appreciative audience, as many of the invited ambassadors' governments were called to meetings dealing with the world financial crisis.

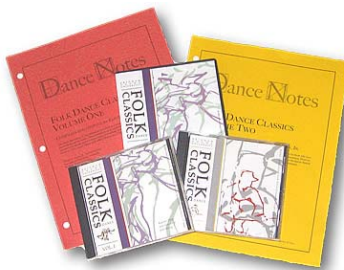


Reflections: Fifty Years of Folk Dance (1956-2006)

If you haven't got your copy to add to your folk dance souvenirs, you need to! This 175 page book has the folk dance history, historical milestones, priceless photographs through the years, map of the countries folk dancers have visited, tour groups, and a roll of all the folk dance members through the years.

It is such a treat to reminisce through the years and see how the folk dance club has evolved. One thing for sure, the folk dance family stays consistent and it shows in their faces. We all remember the friendships formed and the longing to stay connected. The book is \$35 (includes shipping) and we only have 50 copies left. Send information to mblewis5@yahoo.com if you're interested in ordering.

What's new on byufolkdance.com/alumni web site! We've been working hard completing more of the archives surrounding the tour histories. We have been adding many more of the [tour history group photos and tour albums](#). You will notice we are still missing some photos and would love to get copies if you have any available.



Also we have been working hard to give you [MP3 samples of all the music on the Folk Dance Classics](#) (Volume 1 and Volume 2) CDs.

These CDs are available through the Folk Dance office. We are working on making the individual MP3s available for purchase on the internet. Dance briefs are also available on the web site to help you refresh your memory. For CD's or additional information email Ed at edaustin@byu.edu.

Please let us know of any suggestions or comments that you would like to see added to our alumni web site. It would be nice to know what other items you would love to have available for the alumni. We are always looking for emails of alumni not on the list or emails that need to be updated. Those who aren't getting the newsletter by email need to be on our list. Send information to mblewis5@yahoo.com.

We also wanted to express our deepest sympathies to Tammy (Barker) Sandstrom and her husband Mike for their tragic loss of their 16 year old daughter Lindsey who died in a car accident. Our hearts and prayers go out to them at this time and we wanted them to know how much we care.

2008-2009 Scholarship Recipients

We would like to announce the creation of a new scholarship due to the generosity of Marian Jensen, mother of former dancers Susan Jensen Kiser and Allyson Jensen Egbert. We would like to thank all of our contributors and alumni who continue to give our students support through their generous donations.

The alumni scholarship fund is growing. It currently has over \$10,000 in the account. We would like to continue building this fund to endowment status. You may contribute specifically to Alumni Folk Dance Gifts by sending your donation to **Account #30-12198**. Make your checks payable to **BYU Folk Dance** and send it to:

**LDS Philanthropies
PO Box 27188
Provo, UT 84602-7188**

Congratulations to the following outstanding students receiving scholarship gifts.

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| <p>Mary Bee Jensen Endowment Traci Aker Jonathan Brame</p> | <p>Excellence in Folk Arts Award Jennifer Garrard Thomas Rawcliffe</p> |
| <p>Viltis Scholarship Courtney Pearson Carter Matthew Thatcher</p> | <p>Harmon Scholarship Erin Maxwell Sorensen</p> |
| <p>Norma Pardoe Anderson Performance Award Katie Shepherd</p> | <p>Performance Missionary Award Sarah Sanderson Morgan Colin Slade</p> |
| <p>Marian Jensen Scholarship Amanda Dance</p> | |

I would like to thank all those who have made contributions to the newsletter including: Ed Austin, Delynne Peay, Jeanette Geslison, and Brent Lewis.

Vickie Austin