

After the Ball...

The JMU Folk Dance Ensemble Alumni Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 4

September, 1997

The word from Dr. M.

Hi, Everyone. I am writing this note while I'm waiting for the JMU Folk Dance Ensemble auditions to begin.

There are eight men and 7 women back from last year. If you count me it is an even number of couples. (Yea, Men!) We are working on new costumes for the Court Square Concert/Participation Dance with music by Frosty Morning. Hope we will see you on Friday, September 19th from 7 to 9 PM.

There are so many students in classes that I may have to schedule another social dance evening, but at the moment there four (listed in the Calendar).

In addition to the calendar everyone gets, the Ensemble will be presenting two weeks of Elderhostel programs. We will give a Monday lesson and then ask Frosty Morning to join us for the Thursday party to end each week.

Jean Clements (Mexican dance) is almost booked for October 22. We started learning La Bamba (the dance the Richie Vanenz song is about) and Jarabe Tapatio (the Mexican Hat Dance) from her last spring. We will continue those dances and learn a suite of Northern Mexican dances, Santa Rita and two others.

A few brave souls are traveling to rehearsals and performances in Richmond and are joining the Richmond International Folk Dancers to perform in the annual International Food Festival on Sept. 12-14.

Irene Sarnelle will be giving her next annual Ball (1920's) in the Spring. So you have more time to work on your gowns.

We've got lots going on this semester, so there are lots of reasons for you to come see us and join the fun.

--Earlynn J. Miller

Life Steps

an editorial column by Deborah Sheldon

Let's start with the state of our newsletter.

I'd like to welcome the new people to our little group of readers. We have several new graduates and other people recommended by current readers.

I am now mailing this newsletter out to around forty people from Boston to Atlanta. It's becoming quite painful print out all those copies on my little bubble jet. So I'm starting to take the newsletter to my local copy center. Hence the new look. Hope you don't mind the lack of color.

I'd like to remind everyone that I need your input to make this newsletter interesting. You can submit to me articles or information about dance events via e-mail or real mail. They will appear in the next issue I produce.

Hey, was that me complaining last issue? It sure doesn't feel like it. I must have been tired or something.

I still feel that most of the things I complained about are true... They're just not worth complaining about anymore.

Since the last news letter, I turned 24 (big whoop) and I opened a desk top publishing business called ImageSmith. I, personally, really like the name. I have also joined the Southwestern Virginia Swing Dance Society (SWVSDS--

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The Calendar

September 19, Pioneer Dancing at Court Square in Harrisonburg. 7-9 PM. For information call (540) 568-3624.

September 25, Social Dance Evening at JMU: *From the Village Green to the Ballroom*, with Frosty Morning providing music, in Godwin 356 from 7-9:30 PM. Will feature dance favorites like Big Circle Mountain Square Dance, Devil Among the Tailors, Barn Dance mixers, and the Virginia Reel.

September 26, The SWV Swing Dance Society will host a swing swap where people get together and practice and share swing moves to recorded music.

September 27, *Richmond Ballet* Performs at Wilson Auditorium. For information call the JMU Ticket Office.

This newsletter is edited and designed almost solely by Deborah Sheldon. So, if anything's wrong with it, she's to blame. Most of the articles come to me via e-mail. Those articles are only touched if there are glaring mistakes, like typos, or if the author expressly requests editing.

Contributing authors:

Dr. Earlynn Miller

Deborah Sheldon

Please feel free to contribute to future issues.

October 4, The Playford Ball and English Country Dance Workshop-- See highlight events.

October 7, Social Dance Evening at JMU: *Dances of Peace and Faith*. 9-11 PM, Godwin 356. Admission \$2.

October 14, Community dance event at the Dayton Learning Center. There will be a workshop at 7:30 and a dance from 8-11. The Blue Ridge Traditions, Virginia dancers and musicians who will be traveling to Denmark in summer, 1998 will lead American dances. This is a practice for events they will give while on tour in Denmark. \$5 for the general public. \$4 for Folk Arts Revival Society members.

October 18, Swing Dance--See Highlight events.

October 24 & 25, DANCESHARE Program with Faculty and Students from JMU and Shenandoa University.

October 30, Social Dance Evening at JMU: *Fancy Dress Masked Ball*. 7-10 PM in Godwin 356. Formal Costume is required: if you want to dress-up as a devil, make it a formal devil. Admission is \$2.

November 1, The Jefferson Ball-- See Highlight Events.

November 13, 14, & 15, JMU Student Dance Concert. Godwin 355 at 8PM.

December 3, Social Dance Evening at JMU: *The Dance through the Centuries Ball*. 7-10 PM in Godwin Hall. Formal Dress required.

December 4, 5, & 6, the Virginia Repertory Dance Company Concert in Latimer-Shaeffer Theatre on JMU campus. 8PM.

Monthly Events:

Starting September 19, English Country Dance at the Garden Center in Gypsy Hill Park from 7:30-10 PM. The Group meets every first and third Friday of the month. \$2 pays for the hall. The dances are lead by Gail and Leland Ticknor.

If you are in the Harrisonburg area on the 2nd Sat. of the month, there is a contra dance at the Dayton Learning Center. Workshop at 7:30 PM and dance from 8—11 PM. Different caller and band each month. \$5.

The first Saturday of every month, there's Square Dancing in Blacksburg.

Every Tues. night, the South Main Street Cafe in downtown Blacksburg has an "Old Time Jam" where all sorts of acoustic musicians get together and there's always clogging and sometimes there's Big Circle Mountain Dance. It's free and fun.

On the last Saturday of each month through December, The Virginia Tech Folk Dance group will be dancing on the Tech Campus. We always teach beginners and manage to challenge the advanced folks too. This is also free.



Highlight Events

In the past, I have made copies of all the fliers I get, then passed them on to you. Now I am getting enough fliers that this approach just doesn't seem practical. So I am going to summarize the information I receive, and provide you with the means to get more information on your own.

The Playford Ball

Oct. 4, 1997

The Playford ball is held annually in Baltimore, Maryland. This year music is by Liz Donaldson, Andrea Hoag, and Marty Taylor. The program is twenty dances with a few you might find familiar: The Bishop, Dublin Bay, Fandango, Hamilton's Round O, Siege of Limerick, and Sun Assembly. The dance review is from 1:30-4:00 the day of the dance. Reception begins at 6:30 and the Dance Begins at 7:00. "Tea in the British tradition will be served at the break." Admission is \$24 for nonmembers. For more information call (410) 740-3250, (410) 366-5033, or e-mail dschmit@ix.netcom.com.

I am planning on attending this dance. If you want to go, let me know and we can help each other out.

An English Country Dance Workshop

Oct. 4, 1997

The Williamsburg Heritage Dancers are offering this workshop featuring Ron Lehmkuhl and Dale Mantautas as Dancing Masters, with

music by John Needre and Giles Cooke. There will be three sessions in Trinkle Hall at The College of William and Mary, the first on being only for experienced dancers. The others require no experience. Admission is \$7 for one session, \$12 for two or more. For more information call John Millar at (804) 229-1775 or Lou Vosteen at (804) 564-3775. E-mail lvosteen@widowmaker.com or visit their homepage at www.widowmaker.com/~lvosteen.

Swing Dance Oct. 17, 1997

The South-Western Virginia Swing Dance Society is hosting it's monthly swing dance on Friday, October 17. I have been asked to organize the October dance. There is always a live band and lots of really good swing dancers. Lessons begin at 7:00, the dance itself begins 8-ish. Admission is \$9 for gp and \$7 for students. If you're interested, let me know and I can find out about a group rate.

Hispanic Folkloric Ballet

Oct 4, 1997

This event is presented by the Hispanic Folkloric Ballet from the Virginia Beach area. Their mission is to promote better understanding of Mexican culture through music, dance, and lectures. They will be at JMU on Saturday, October 4, 6 PM, Wilson Hall. For more information call (540) 568-6928.

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how's that for a mouthful), been asked to host and teach at one of their dances, been recruited by a Radford University dancer to help teach West-Coast Swing Classes, and somehow ended up in the middle of some Big Circle dancing at a bar in town. I've got so much going on, I feel like I'm back at school.

The Swing Dance Society is just starting to get itself organized after its two founding members and leaders moved away last summer. I really want to tell them how to organize the group based on my experience at JMU, but I'm not sure how similar their situation is to the FDE. So, I'm advising them in the form of pointed questions like, Have you thought about having the same person in charge of booking the bands for all your dances so that someone new doesn't have to figure

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The Jefferson Ball

Nov. 1, 1997

The Colonial Dance Club of Richmond presents their annual ball in November. They have an ambitious program of twenty five dances including Barham Down, Duke of Kent's Waltz, and Fain I Would. There is no practice session listed, but that doesn't really mean anything. Admission is \$23 for real people, \$18 for students. For more information call Linda Salter at 360-2630 or Vada Powers at 320-1495. Reservations must be recieved by Oct. 25.



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it out for every event? They seem to be listening to me, so I hope I'm giving good advice. Hosting a dance for them is going to be interesting, considering I haven't got a clue what is usually done, and what does and does not work in this situation.

I'm not any better prepared to help teach a West-Coast Swing class than I am to host a swing dance. I'm really not any good at West-Coast.

(For anyone who doesn't know what I'm talking about, West-Coast Swing is a form of Swing which has the woman traveling in a slot about 2 feet wide.

There are about four basic step patterns which really don't look at all like other forms of swing. And the patterns tend to be very complex and showy. It's a challenging dance to learn.) The fellow who recruited me had danced with me several times before asking for my help,

so I figure that it's going to be the kind of thing where I can learn as I go. I've always wanted to learn to West-Coast anyway.

I don't really have anything to say about the Big Circle dancing, except, how cool can life be? I plan on going back there again and again. And again. You get the point.

Well, talk to you again soon, and I hope I will see at some of the events this semester.



*Some people march to a
different drummer, others
polka!*

Deborah Sheldon
605 Rose Ave.
Blacksburg, VA 24060

