

# nacds news

December 2009

Newsletter of North Alabama Country Dance Society • Group Affiliate, Country Dance & Song Society • Established 1982  
<http://secontra.com/NACDS/html> • Kevin Riggs, Editor • email: k-riggs@mchsi.com • (256) 859-9281

NACDS Newsletter

December 2009

## NACDS HOLIDAY DANCE!

Our Holiday Dance will be December 19th, at 8:00 p.m. The caller will be Susan Kevra, and music will be provided by Waxwing. Admission is \$10 for all adults and \$5 for students.

So set the date aside, and let's throw ourselves a dance party to celebrate the end of a year, holidays, family, and the pleasure of one another's company!

*So the shortest day came, and the year died,  
And everywhere down the centuries of the snow-white world  
Came people singing, dancing,  
To drive the dark away.  
They lighted candles in the winter trees;  
They hung their homes with evergreen;  
They burned beseeching fires all night long  
To keep the year alive,  
And when the new year's sunshine blazed awake  
They shouted, reveling.  
Through all the frosty ages you can hear them  
Echoing behind us — Listen!!  
All the long echoes sing the same delight,  
This shortest day,  
As promise wakens in the sleeping land:  
They carol, fest, give thanks,  
And dearly love their friends,  
And hope for peace.  
And so do we, here, now,  
This year and every year.  
Welcome Yule!*

Susan Cooper, in "The Shortest Day"

The more you bring to a party, the more you take away from it. Please bring snacks to share! Look around your house for items you can bring to donate as door prizes. Come during the afternoon to help clean and decorate during the day on Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>. Bring strings of lights and greenery to make wreaths.

## JANUARY 30: DINNER, CONCERT & DANCE EVENT

Don't forget that **Steamshovel** will be playing January 30, 2010, in a 5th Saturday Dinner Concert Event at Flying Monkey Arts Center, from 5-7 pm, then for our contra dance at Faith Presbyterian. It's a full evening of music, food, and dance!

Tickets for the Dinner Concert are \$25, and you can buy them online at RockTheHollow.com or at The Fret Shop/Kenny Mango's.

The Flying Monkey Arts Center is at Lowe Mill:  
2211 Seminole Drive

Dinner will be catered by Walter Thames. There's a link to the menu at RockTheHollow.com.

Shortly following the dinner concert, Steamshovel will play for contra dancing to the calling of Gary Nelson at Faith Presbyterian Church, 5003 Whitesburg Dr., (corner of Whitesburg Dr. & Airport Rd.). Admission is \$10 for all adults and \$5 for students – but show your ticket stub from the dinner/concert, and get a \$2 discount on the adult price.



## HUNTSVILLE CALENDAR

- Huntsville dances are the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of each month in the gym at Faith Presbyterian Church, 5003 Whitesburg Dr., (corner of Whitesburg Dr. & Airport Rd.). Beginners Workshop is at 7:00 PM, and then the regular dance is from 7:30 – 10:30 PM.
- Admission is \$7 (\$6 for members), \$4 for teens, free for ages 12 & under.

Remember to bring comfortable, **non-scuffing shoes** for dancing. Bring someone new to a dance this month!

- Gen'l info, [bwalls@pobox.com](mailto:bwalls@pobox.com) or [www.secontra.com](http://www.secontra.com); Schedule info, Doug Roth: [hdroth@pobox.com](mailto:hdroth@pobox.com).

### DECEMBER 5 : HUNTSVILLE

CALLER — JANE EWING  
BAND — MAPLE HILL

### DECEMBER 19 : HUNTSVILLE

HOLIDAY DANCE  
ADMISSION IS \$10, EXCEPT STUDENTS \$5  
CALLER — SUSAN KEVRA  
BAND — WAXWING

## AREA DANCE GYPSY CALENDAR

### DECEMBER 4 : NASHVILLE

CALLER — CHRISSEY DAVIS-CAMP  
BAND — THE CONTRARIAN ENSEMBLE

### DECEMBER 8 : FLAT CREEK

CALLER — CHRISSEY DAVIS-CAMP  
BAND — JIM & INGE WOOD WITH VARIOUS & SUNDRY

### DECEMBER 11 : NASHVILLE

CALLER — SUSAN KEVRA  
BAND — CUMBERLAND TENDERFOOTS

### DECEMBER 12 : CHATTANOOGA

CALLER — JANET SHEPHERD  
BAND — WAXWING

### DECEMBER 13 : BIRMINGHAM

FOOTMAD CHRISTMAS PARTY  
BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS, 2-5PM

### DECEMBER 18 : NASHVILLE

CALLER — EDDIE DOSS  
BAND — WAXWING

### DECEMBER 22 : FLAT CREEK

CALLER — CHRISSEY DAVIS-CAMP  
BAND — JIM & INGE WOOD WITH VARIOUS & SUNDRY

### DECEMBER 31 : BIRMINGHAM

CALLER — SUSAN DAVIS  
BAND — FOOTCAPE

### To LEARN MORE

#### Footmad (Birmingham, AL)

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

205-822-0505

2nd Saturdays at the YWCA in downtown Birmingham  
4th Sunday afternoons (except May-August)

#### CTDS (Chattanooga, TN)

[contranooga.org](http://contranooga.org)

All Saints Academy

310 East 8th St. - Chattanooga, TN

#### Misty Mountain Dancers (Sewanee, TN)

931-598-0814

[mistycontra.zoomshare.com](http://mistycontra.zoomshare.com)

American Legion Hall

36 University Avenue, Sewanee, TN

#### NCD (Nashville, TN)

615-356-3869

[nashvillecountrydancers.org](http://nashvillecountrydancers.org)

Contra dance most Friday nights

English Country Dance 2nd Sunday of each month

See web site for locations

#### Flat Creek, TN

[jimwoodmusic.net/fcc.htm](http://jimwoodmusic.net/fcc.htm)

Flat Creek Community Center south of Shelbyville, TN

## A BIT FARTHER AWAY, BUT WORTH THE TRAVEL

CCD (Atlanta) dances on Fridays & alternate Tuesdays.

<http://contradance.org>

KCD (Knoxville) dances every Monday.

<http://www.kornet.org/kcd/>

MCD (Memphis) dances on the 1st & 3rd Fridays.

<http://hometown.aol.com/horselovers/index.html>

Sauvie Community Dances (N. GA) once a month from Sept – May. <http://sauviecontra.home.mindspring.com/>

## **HOW TO BECOME A GREAT DANCER IN FIVE EASY STEPS**

### **1. Listen to the Music**

You heard some wonderful music at the dance. Now, listen to more at home or in the car or on your iPod, too. Traditional dance and music can't be separated. It's essential for dancers to hear the musical phrases that provide the foundation for the dances. The more you listen to dance music, the sooner you'll reach the time where your body "learns" the dance and your brain can just rest and relax and enjoy the experience.

### **2. Practice**

Go to dances. Learning to do this kind of dancing is just like learning any other physical skill. It takes practice.

You're probably exercising some new social skills, too, as you enter this world of traditional dance. That takes some practice, too. So at your next dance remember: keep moving, smile and look around.

Did a friend who encouraged you to come to the dance? Did you come with a friend who is also a newcomer? Talk about the experience. How did you feel? What are your concerns? What was the most fun? When is the next dance?

On both the physical and the social sides, it takes a few repetitions to get familiar with the basics. Then, after a few more dances, you'll discover that you've become proficient. You know the ropes, what to expect and how to do things. And then - every time after that - it gets easier and more wonderful. You will be amazed!

### **3. Dance with Experienced Dancers**

The best dancers will help you get where you need to be without your even realizing that they've done so. Other dancers will offer just the slightest visible hints; perhaps a small hand gesture or a nod of the head to indicate a direction. Dancers who are not quite as skilled may try to help you with a slight tug on your hand or a gentle hand in the middle of your back, steering you in the correct direction. Stay alert and be open to all these offers of help. When you meet someone who makes it easy for you to succeed, be sure to seek her or him out to be a partner.

It's likely that you will be asked to dance by experienced dancers. Many of the best dancers come with the intention of helping out newcomers, especially early in the evening. When

someone asks you to dance, your first reaction might be to protest, "I'm new at this, I really don't know what I'm doing." You don't have to say that - they already know it. That's why they asked you to dance. After all, that's how we all learned to do this kind of dancing, through the kindness of strangers.

### **4. Think Smooth**

No, actually, you want to think smooooooth. If you dance with a lot of up and down motion it becomes more difficult to be in sync with other dancers. "Bouncy" dancing uses more energy and may make you tire more quickly. Most of the time in traditional dancing, the goal is to be relaxed and feel like you are gliding.

But . . . there are exceptions. Some dances call for skipping. Some steps and balances are done with a hop or a bounce. When the dance calls for a sashay or a gallop – that's a time when "smooth" flies out the window. Leaps of exuberance and all kinds of improvisation are enjoyable aspects of our dancing – but always safely under control and timed to fit into the cooperative whole of the dance.

And most of the time . . . you will want to keep your dancing smooooooth.

### **5. Don't Panic**

Remember the advice in The Hitchiker's Guide to the Galaxy – even when it seems like the world is coming to an end – don't panic.

It's only a dance. Don't worry about going wrong. Everybody goes wrong at some time or other – usually a couple of times every night.

Relax. Have fun!



**GET CONNECTED, STAY  
CONNECTED**

Visit the NACDS web site:

<http://secontra.com/NACDS.html>

There is an announcement list for everyone and a Yahoo Group discussion list for those more involved. E-mail [nacds@pobox.com](mailto:nacds@pobox.com) if you'd like to be on either.

**Yahoo group:**

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NACDScontraCommunity/>



**North Alabama Country Dance Society  
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*Address Correction Requested*



Send just \$10 for one, or  
\$15 per family, to the address above.

*Make checks payable to NACDS.  
(mailing label shows renewal date)*

*Members receive monthly newsletter,  
and a \$1 DISCOUNT to each regular dance!*