

Balance & Swing

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LAVENDER COUNTRY & FOLK DANCERS

“Let us read,
& let us dance;
these two
amusements
will never do
any harm to
the world.”

Voltaire

LAVENDER DANCE LEGACY APPEAL

Dear Dancers,

You know LCFD for all the great local gender-role free contra dances series - in Jamaica Plain and Montague MA, New York City, Berkeley and Oakland CA - and the English Country dance series in Jamaica Plain and Atlanta GA. You may have been to dance camps in Monte Toyon CA, Woodstock CT, and Becket MA. We also support LGBTQ and ally callers and musicians. LCFD works to sustain our member groups by providing guidance, insurance, communications, and occasional grants.

We established the Lavender Dance Legacy (LDL) in 2007 to make sure we have the financial resources to continue these dance camps and local dances for years to come. LDL goals are to supplement regular activities with additional funds and to maintain reserves so we can recover from unanticipated losses. We are writing to ask you to contribute toward these goals.

For example, if local dances or dance camps run into financial difficulty, LDL assists both financially and organizationally. LDL will continue to foster growth of our gender-role free dance community through publicity projects and support of new dance groups across the country.

Thus far we have not had to tap into the LDL since dance camps ran at a slight profit and we raise a few thousand dollars each year at the NEFFA food booth. However, rising rental and staffing costs coupled with slightly declining attendance and the desire to not substantially increase admission fees to camps or local dances has produced more financial pressure such that we probably will have to start using these funds to keep the dance series and camps going.

Please help us continue building the Legacy Fund. All contributions, small or large, are important in securing the future of our dance community. Legacy funds are invested in interest bearing accounts so they are safe and not subject to loss. LCFD is a non-profit organization with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status; your contributions are tax deductible.

Please make checks out to LCFD, and mail to:
LCFD Legacy Fund
9 West Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Thank you,
Lavender Dance Legacy

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Season's Greetings

MORE NOTES FROM BECKET

As you may know, participants in the LCFD Dance Camp weekend are invited to complete a questionnaire to help the LCFD board and Dance Camp committee provide better service for future camps.

The following are comments taken from the Fall Camp evaluations, followed by an Action Item (AI) that will be addressed.

REGISTRATION

"Online registration would be even easier."

"YMCA forms are tedious."

AI: Setup online registration and camp forms (as applicable)

WORK EXCHANGE

"I always appreciate the opportunity to do work exchange. It's likely that I wouldn't be able to attend without it. **Judy Hawkins** is great to work with."

"Not a work exchanger, but just wanted to express my appreciation for all that they do."

AI: Advance notice of opportunities and possible online sign-up

PERSONAL REQUESTS

"Room reservations are a good thing, and worked out well. as the group ages (and it seems it has been, I've had this comment more than once) top bunks are becoming too precarious for many of us. and the non-snoring rooms are essential."

"My food allergies are different from most folks and I have many as well. The kitchen staff was without a doubt very understanding and created some very delicious meals for me."

AI: Continue to monitor requests

PUBLICITY

"I would have attended anyway, but it was nice to see the interactions on Facebook and it did seem to get people excited. It was also nice for some of us to put ideas out there and have people comment."

"I liked having the reminders to nudge me into the early registration time."

"I'm a long time attendee and don't need to be convinced to attend. I don't use Facebook, but the individual camper reminiscences about camp sent via email were interesting."

AI: Explore further ways to publicize

FACILITIES

"There were some issues with parts of the floor being a bumpy and uneven and the dust seemed more rampant than in previous years."

"The bathrooms in the dance hall were rustic... very rustic."

AI: Communicate with camp staff about the dance hall floor

FOOD

"I appreciated having more fruit options in the snack room – especially the red grapes."

"The effort that **John Burrows** puts into the afternoon tea makes dance camp so special."

"The dining hall meals were adequate, though I feel that there needs to be more variation from year to year for some variety, if that is somehow possible."

AI: Better labeling of vegetarian options

PROGRAM/STAFF/SOUND

"Combining Saturday afternoon English with tea, in the same room: nice concept but didn't work well in practice."

"**Lisa Marie Lunt's** bead stringing was wonderful."

"The variety show was consistently good this year which is not always the case."

"Round singing was terrific."

"I love everything I try."

"**Will Mentor** was fantastic... and **Robin Hayden** made English appealing to me for the first time."

"There was much to do and not enough time for it all."

"I think we may be overdue to have another workshop on helping beginners."

"I love these camps so much I'd probably go if a frog was calling."

"So glad **Arthur Prokosch** is back. The sound was *great* this time."

AI: Intermediate waltz workshop

AI: Buy orange microphone wind-screen

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

"Dance Camp is always a joy"

"Magical. The people. The energy. The love. Hugs. How quickly it went by...."

"I had 3 other dance events (Irish & 2 square) to choose from this weekend. This was absolutely my number one choice."

"Fun, frisky, full of community!"

"The way Jim Babcock, **Hanni Beyer Lee**, and **Den Collins** interfaced with us as the weekend went along made all the difference for me."

AI: Recruit new campers

Fun Fact : Most respondents to the evaluation are gay men aged 50-59.

DANCER OF THE MONTH

NATHANIEL BANKS



“How long have you been contra dancing?”

I have been contra dancing for three years. I started at the College Hill Contra Dance series in Providence. I also danced at the Community Church of Providence. My first caller was **Linda Leslie** who remains a valued individual in my dance journey. As I'd like to become a caller, she has given me feedback and has made it very clear that contra dancing is the best thing ever!

Do you dance other styles?

I do not dance any other styles as much as I dance contra. However, I am very interested in getting to know how to salsa, bachata, and merengue. As I am from Latin descent, I would love to get into my heritage through dance.

Do other people in your family dance?

My family situation is tough, but I have brought my aunt and her “girlfriend group” and they have all returned to the Rehoboth dance.

What do you do off the dance-floor ?

Off the dance-floor, I work and go to school. I attend Rhode Island College as an English major. I love it there and I enjoy my time as the president of my dorm, Thorp Hall. I also work on campus in the Office of Academic Support and Information Services (OASIS). I am crazy busy, so I thoroughly enjoyed camp. It came as a nice break during an otherwise insane life.

Speaking of camp, you attended your first LCFD Dance Camp this year. What did you think?

I freakin' LOVED it so much! The most amazing part was the idea that there weren't any questions as to where I came from, why I am dancing at an LBGT dance, or who I knew. I came, I danced, and I sweated with friends who became family that weekend. It was extra special to have the caller, Will Mentor there and to have called with him. It was excellent to dance with strangers on Friday and with friends on Sunday morning.

Will you come back?

A confident yes.

What is your home dance series?

My home dance series are two dances. My “home” dance is the 33 year old, second and fourth Friday contra dances in Rehoboth at the Memorial Goff Hall in Rehoboth at 124 Bay State Road, Rehoboth MA.

Editor's Note In an attempt to keep dancers connected and learning about each other, this space will feature a dancer from our wide-spread and growing community. If you'd like to be interviewed for this column, please email your interest and how best to reach you to newsletter@lcfid.org or phone 631-790-6917.

Coming in January:
Lisa Lackey from New York, NY

OVERHEARD

@ Autumn Harvest Ball
Submitted by Jim Babcock

Ben: “You can do whatever you want with your hands while you're setting. Well, within reason”

Share something you overheard at a dance and send it to newsletter@lcfid.org

DID YOU KNOW?

Now on [Facebook](#): The Western Massachusetts Gender Free Contra Dance (aka Montague). Many thanks to **Dee Michel** for setting this up!

The first gender-free contra dance held in Palm Springs, CA last month and hosted by **David Wolgin** was a great success. About 75 dancers turned out, and **Andy Shore** guest called a few dances. There are plans to make this a regular event.

Jim Babcock and **Judy Hawkins** are the new co-chairs of the LCFD board, replacing **Read Weaver** and **Eileen Casella Rider** who stepped down in October.

According to CalorieCount.com, you can burn up to 315 calories per hour while contradancing. Let's dance AND drink that egg nog.

NEED HOLIDAY SHOPPING IDEAS?

LISA LACKEY'S FIRST BOOK

Lisa Lackey, artist and dancer from New York, finished her first book, *The Composition of Family*. It is a compilation of my drawings which center on a family's relationships over time. Interspersed between these drawings are completed pieces of artwork showing how I translate these line drawings into a collage of fabrics, hand and machine stitched to reveal details.

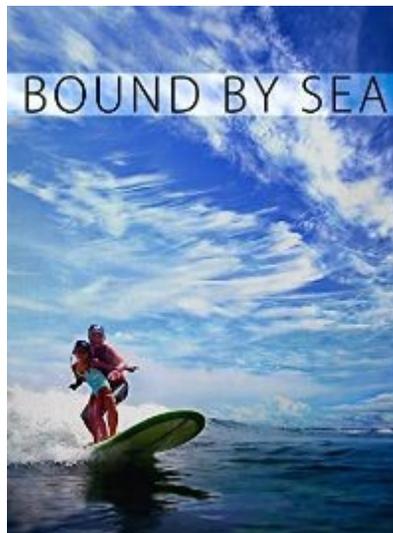
There are also two short essays. The first, entitled Time, describes the process the making of the book took and how it came to be both an art book and a coloring book. The final essay, called Bi*four*ca*tion, shares my reasons for quartering the faces of people. Available on [Amazon](#) for \$17.10.

Use promo code BOOKDEAL25 for an extra 25% discount
Qualifies for FREE shipping on orders over \$35

DANCE CAMP T-SHIRT

We completely sold all of the first batch of our vintage design (c.1997) by the end of camp in Becket in October. Didn't get one? No worries. You can still order one. Some people asked if tank tops might be available and the answer is YES. Sizes S through XL will be \$15; 2XL and 3XL will be \$20. Payment at point of sale (in person.) Net proceeds will go to the Lavender Dance Legacy Fund.

Click [here](#) to reserve your very own piece of wearable advertising by December 31.



DOUG PLUMMER'S 2016 CONTRADANCE CALENDAR

Doug Plummer writes "My goal with the calendar is to display the ecosystem of the contra dance and music world. I aim for geographical diversity of course, but also diversity in kinds of dances: community and family dances, big festivals, rural dances, urban dances, house dances, LGBT dances. I document our music making, without which there wouldn't be dancing, and the variety of places that is nurtured and shared."

Copies are available for \$15-20, and this money will help support the Queer Contra dance in Oakland, CA. Queer Contra made the month of June. Contact **Mark Galipeau** by [email](#) or [Facebook](#).

BOUND BY SEA

The ocean is a powerful force. She teaches us about failure, but also about success. How to fall, and how to get back up. Jack Viorel fell in love with the ocean at a young age. The ocean saved his life. Now, he is giving back and using the ocean as a tool to save others from whatever they are struggling with. Join Jack and his daughter Gabby as they travel to four oceans of the world to share their love of surfing while helping those in need.

Filed on location in: North Carolina, India, California, & Norway. Directed **Nate Daniel**, who is producing the LCFD documentary.

Available to buy or rent on [Amazon](#).



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Cambridge, MA 02139
Email: lcfid@lcfid.org

The community for gender-free dancing

Lavender Country and Folk Dancers (LCFD) is an umbrella organization forming a loosely knit group of gender-free dance clubs. (Sometimes the expression is "gender neutral," "gender role free," or "role optional.") We currently encompass several dance traditions and welcome the opportunity to include more.

LCFD is an affiliate of the **Country Dance and Song Society (CDSS)** and obtains its 501(c)(3) tax exempt status from that relationship.

LCFD enthusiastically welcomes other local gender-free dance groups, and other groups that want to run gender-free dance camps. Affiliation with LCFD lets us provide web site access, liability insurance, general assistance, and the possibility of various forms of financial assistance.

UPCOMING EVENTS : DECEMBER

DATE	CITY	DANCE SERIES	CALLER	BAND
SAT DEC 05	Montague, MA	Western Mass Gender Free Contra (& Potluck)	Ron Blechner	TBA
SUN DEC 06	Decatur, GA	Quicksilver Country Dancers	Maggie Cowan	TBA
TUE DEC 08	Jamaica Plain, MA	Boston Gender Free English	Miriam Newman	Valerie Peters, Jonathan Gilbert, Ron Dann, and Audrey Knuth
FRI DEC 11	New York, NY	Village Contra	Luke Danforth	Party of Three
FRI DEC 11	Oakland, CA	Circle Left	Rachel S. Wallace	Tunestone
SAT DEC 12	Jamaica Plain, MA	Boston Gender Free Contra (Advanced Dance & Potluck)	Dugan Murphy	Audrey Knuth , Julie Vallmont, and Rachel Bell
TUE DEC 22	Jamaica Plain, MA	Boston Gender Free English	Miriam Newman	Barbara Pixton, Elaine Winic, and Marnen Laibow-Koser
SAT DEC 26	Jamaica Plain, MA	Boston Gender Free Contra	Ben Sachs-Hamilton	Gift of the Marcii

For more information on each dance series, visit the [LCFD Event Calendar](#)