



Spokane Folklore Society

FOOTNOTES

Serving folk arts in the Inland Northwest since 1977

November 2021

Volume 46

No. 11

Lots of Dancing Going On in November!

Our first dance, November 3, welcomes a new band with familiar faces from Coeur d'Alene.

Long time supporters of the SFS, Dave and Char Beach join with fiddler Jan Clizer. Their name Banna Damhsa means "dance band" in gaelic draws on their love of Irish and Scottish music.

Emily Faulkner will join them calling a wonderful range of contras and other dances.

The rest of the month will see Nora Scott and Nancy Staub calling with the Prestwold Players and River City. And don't forget Jam Band night too.

All dances are held at the Woman's Club, 9th and Walnut; newcomer session at 7:15 with the dance beginning at 7:30 and ending with a waltz at 9:30PM.

Admission is \$7 for members and \$10 for non members.

Proof of vaccination and masks are required.

Spokane Public Radio Festival Broadcast 2021

Saturday, November 13 from 11 to 1

Every year Spokane Public Radio hosts a live broadcast from the Fall Folk Festival. This year due to the cancellation of the Live Festival at SCC, we are very happy to report that the broadcast will still happen but will take place from their studio. They have selected 8 performers from those who had been accepted for the Live Festival.

Tune in to KPBX 91.1 FM from 11 am to 1 pm. Saturday, November 13

The first hour will feature –

True North Duo – Americana folk duo comprised of award-winning singer-songwriters, Kristen Grainger and Dan Wetzel

Lyle Morse - traditional and original acoustic blues on guitar with soulful vocals and harmonica

Jen Edgren - songs for kids of all ages

Spokane Storytelling League – stories for young and old – humorous, historical, folk tales, legends

The second hour will feature

Dr. Bob Riggs – one guy and a guitar

Frankie Ghee - original acoustic folk music

Ena Wang – Guzheng (Chinese Zither) – Ena has been playing since she was 6 year old and has performed around the world. She is currently a student at Gonzaga.

Ron Doyen - mostly blues -MORE ON THE [FOLK FESTIVAL](#) PAGE 3



Lyle Morse



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Frankie Ghee

SFS Mission

The purpose of the Spokane Folklore Society shall be to promote a broader community awareness and involvement in cultural folk traditions, such as music, dance, and other folk arts through such social and educational events as concerts, dances, festivals, workshops, lectures, demonstrations, and newsletters.

www.spokanefolklore.org

Support Folklore Society Business Members

Business memberships not only provide valuable support to SFS, but the businesses receive extra benefits. New business members are listed monthly in the newsletter and have links on our website: www.spokanefolklore.org.

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About Footnotes

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Copy deadline is the 15th of the month. Articles from the membership are welcome and appreciated! Copy may be edited for space or clarity.

SFS BOARD MEMBERS

President: Brendan Biele
Vice-President: Joy Morgan
Treasurer: Judy Lundgren
Secretary: Penn Fix
Members at Large: Jim Angle, Gina Claeys, Cathy Dark, Sylvia Gobel

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Calendar of Contra Dances At the Woman's Club

DATE	BAND	CALLER
11/3/21	Banne Damhsa	Emily Faulkner
11/10/21	Prestwold Players	Nora Scott
11/17/21	Jam Band	Emily Faulkner—host
11/24/21	River City	Nancy Staub

Bigfoot Folk Dancers

Bigfoot Folk Dancers continue to meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 7 to 9 PM at the home of Karen and Justin. Call 509-327-7862 for directions. Since we are dancing indoors, proof of vaccination and masks are essential.

November 9 and 23! - JOIN US:)

Memberships are Open!

Renew yours for our 2021-2022 Season at any of the dances or online any time.

Since we have decided not to offer printed newsletters, we will end the choice of printed or digital memberships. The board has decided that individual memberships are \$25 and family memberships are \$40. Other categories like sustaining remain the same.

New Business Sponsor

Our newest business sponsor Geoff Seitz lives in St. Louis. This past spring we featured an article about Geoff. Not only does he make violins but he sells other violins and instruments. Need help or advice just email Geoff at Seitzviolins@sbcglobal.net.

SFS Vaccination Policy for Indoor Dance Events

The board of the Spokane Folklore Society has decided to require the proof of vaccination in order for participants including dancers, musicians, callers, sound techs and anyone else to be involved in one of our sponsored dances. You must bring your COVID CDC card or a copy of it on your phone and show it at the door.

By doing this, you will be registered and will not be required to show it at the next dance. You will not be able to participate unless you have been registered.

As CDC or state guidelines currently require masks to be worn indoors, you will be expected to do so.

This way, we are doing everything we can to get us all dancing and playing music again, whatever it takes. See you on the dance floor!

Fall Folk Festival 2021 Will Be Virtual

After consultation with Spokane Community College, the Fall Folk Festival and SCC are in agreement that the Live Festival will be canceled for this year due to Covid concerns in our area.

We will still have a Virtual Festival with performances available on our website starting November 13.

Spokane Public Radio, KPBX 91.1 FM will present a live broadcast from their studio which will air Saturday, November 13 from 11 am to 1 pm.

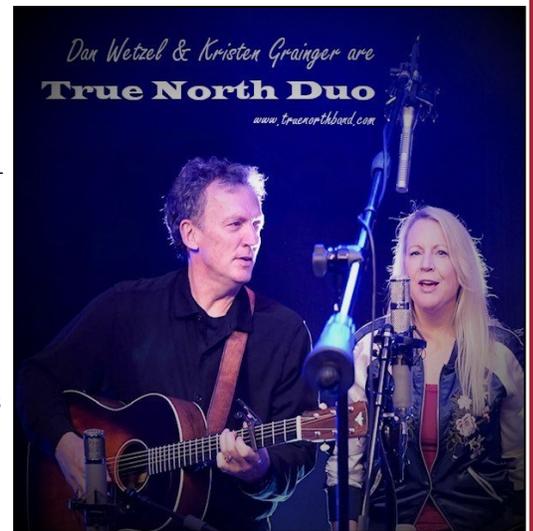
Check our website for updates www.spokanefolkfestival.org



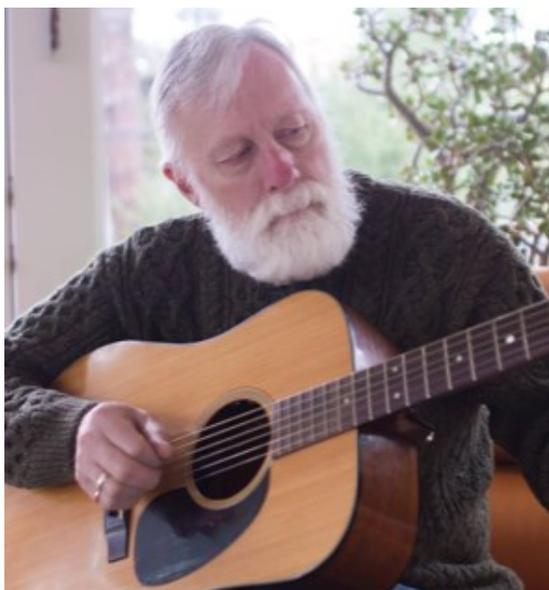
Ena Wang
Chinese Zither, or gusheng—International champion!

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Regardless of the circumstances that we face the Fall Folk Festival Committee continues its commitment to provide a venue to showcase traditional music dance and the arts to Spokane and the surrounding area. State mandated restrictions at the time of the Festival will be observed.



True North Duo
Folk-bluegrass powerhouse of terrific songwriting, lush vocals and crazy-good instrumentalists.



Bob Riggs
Original tunes and covers



Jen Edgren
Great songs for kids of all ages:)

Forty Years Ago—

Dancing in Ferry & Stevens County

By Penn Fix

My real introduction to dancing and calling north of Spokane occurred forty years ago at the Malo Grange Hall outside of Republic, WA. What I remember most was driving forever to get there. Did it really take three hours or did it just feel that way? When I arrived at the grange hall in the late afternoon, my first reaction was that no one was going to come to this dance. After all, there was just a crossroads with a grange hall and a post office. Welcome to dancing in the back country!

For Gary Miller, Republic was a longways from UC Berkeley and for that matter University of Chicago. Born and raised in Spokane, he had spent his undergrad at University of Chicago studying mathematics and then began a PhD program at U C Berkley. And during that time, he learned to play guitar and then fiddle. In the late 1970s, Gary found himself working as a ranch hand living in a bunk house outside of Republic; the rancher's wife was also a vet; and Gary worked at her clinic as well. He then built a log cabin on his dad's land west of Bonner's Ferry.

After he entered vet school at WSU, Gary attended his first contra dance in the spring of 1981 at the Moscow Renaissance Faire. In the summer of 1981, he returned to work in Republic and danced where ever he could in the "north"



Malo Grange

The Malo Grange was the site for contra dancing in 1981 and 1982.

country including Priest River, Bonner's Ferry, Rice, and Newport, Wa. The first event he attended that summer was a bluegrass concert held at the Waukonda Grange near



1982 Malo Dance Poster

Tonasket. Gary recalled later, that while Cheatgrass played, "not many people were dancing; I had the inspiration remembering the Renaissance Faire dance that more people would get on the floor instead of sitting if only there was a caller; I decided there should be such a dance in Ferry County and so next week at the Priest River dance I invited Penn Fix to come and call."

That dance was held on August 29, 1981 at the Malo Grange, outside of Republic. Penn's concerns about not enough dancers proved unfounded. From Gary's journal, he reported that 120 dancers came for that first dance. They represented two groups of folks: those who had square danced for years at the grange and those who Gary described as "back to the land hippies." Some lived in a commune north of the small community of Curlew. Over the next two years, dances were held sporadically, sometimes in the winter and then in the summer. Attendance did decline with the older generation bowing out but a core of dancers from the younger generation kept dances going. In July 24, 1982, Gary noted that there were 60 people in attendance. Many of the musicians for these dances lived and worked in the area including; Mat Oakes, mandolin; Greg Eberle, fiddle; Ollie Royer, fiddle; Bill Hageman, piano; and Dan Sky, guitar. Others were there for the summer or were guests including Helen Ulschneider, banjo; and Nancy Haugan, viola; Gary first played fiddle and then accordion. When Gary decided not to return to Republic for the summer of 1983 the dances ended.

(Continued from page 4)

While Republic dances attracted a variety of folks, the hot bed of dancing was occurring in Stevens County, the next county over. Beginning in mid 1970s, music and later dance events were held in small communities like Northport, Onion Creek, Kettle Falls, Rice, and Colville. At the heart of all this activity were Gerry Copeland and Margie Heller.

Gerry grew up in Colfax, Washington. He received an architectural degree from U of Washington and designed house boats for Lake Washington owners. Tired of the city life, in 1972, he along with two other couples bought some property along the Columbia River near Rice. They moved there in 1973-4 and built a commune called the Cheweka Creek Commune.

Margie grew up in Pennsylvania and later attended Oberlin College to study music. Encouraged by some college friends, she later moved to Seattle where she met other musicians. One of them, Paul King bought some land near Addy, Washington. Margie visited him in 1973 and decided to stay. She found a job working for the Head Start office in Colville. The next fall she met Gerry at a singles party; he was looking for a house sitter so he could winter in the southwest; with her friend Bev Stolker, Margie took care of his chickens and other creatures at the commune. When Gerry returned in the spring of 1975, Margie and Bev stayed on. A year later Gerry and Margie were married at the Quil-lascut Grange hall in Rice. Eventually the commune divided its property with Gerry and Margie then building their unique octagonal stone house where both their children were born.

Communes stretched across the valley from Chewelah to North-



Margie and Cay

Margie Heller and Cayenne at the Cheweka Creek Commune

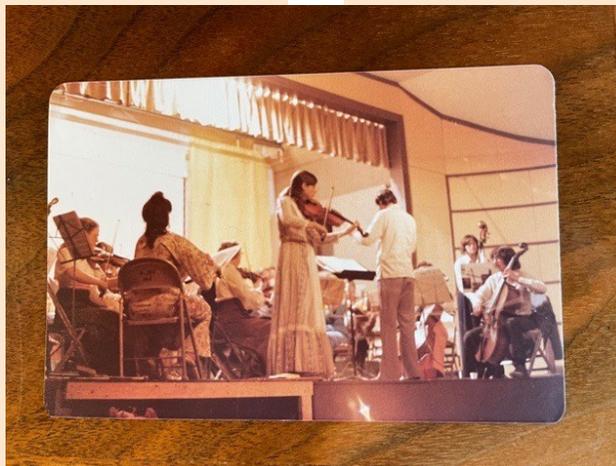
port and the Canadian border. Colville was at its center. The back to landers were much more isolated in areas like Priest River probably because of challenging mountainous terrain. The valleys around Colville and the nearby fertile land along the Columbia River were more conducive to groups of people living together and working the land. Many came from the west side of Washington as well as California and even back East. Some responded to ads in the Mother Earth News. They wanted to get out of the cities that they perceived were falling apart. It was prudent to own property where you could provide your own food. The fertile valleys and river slopes of Stevens County were perfect for their dreams.



Stranger Creek Minstrels

Stranger Creek Minstrels played for Gerry and Margie's wedding. L/R Tom Drake, Margie Heller, Gerry Copeland, Candace Holt, Ileana Soto, Byron Kerner

Most of these back to landers valued community; some lived on communes together. But they also saw value in supporting the greater community. Certainly, Colville the center of this widespread community benefited. A food co-op was established that remains active to this day. Also, a community theatre was revitalized just up the road in Kettle Falls.



Woodland Orchestra

Margie and her friends answered the call for an orchestra to play at the Woodland Theatre in Kettle Falls, WA. The owners thought they were getting a big band but instead they got a classical orchestra! Margie is playing at one of many performances.

Besides wanting to grow their own food, many of these folks wanted to make their own music. It was within this context that Margie thrived. With her friend Paul, she played classical music, even driving to Spokane for several years where they played together for the Whitworth College community symphony. Another neighbor, Tom Drake who lived in the nearby commune called the Stranger Creekers, introduced her to old time music. Very quickly they formed the Stranger Creek Minstrels that included Margie and Tom playing fiddle, Candace Holt on mandolin, Ileana Soto on

(Continued on page 6)

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banjo, Byron Kerner on guitar and Gerry on washboard; they played for many community events in the valley. One of her friends, encouraged her to attend the American Fiddle Tunes Festival in Port Townsend in 1979; instead of playing tunes, she instead took a contra dance workshop from Seattle caller Sandy Bradley. And she



Folkdance at Rice

Members of Radost and the BigFoot Folkdancers hosted a dance party at the Quilliascut Grange in Rice, 1983.

immediately fell in love with dancing. Margie was already attending concerts sponsored by the Spokane Folklore Society at the old Second City venue but when she joined the Spokane Symphony in the fall of 1980 she became a regular at the newly formed contra dance series at the Woman's Club in Spokane.

Gerry too loved music and dance. While living in Seattle, he was exposed to lots of different kinds dance and music. He had several friends in one of Seattle's major folk dance ensembles, Radost

The dance and music scene in Stevens County reflected the diverse interests of Gerry and Margie. Contra dances were held in Rice and Colville beginning in 1981. Bill Hewes, a Colville native, who had returned home after college to work in his family business, remembered dancing that year at the Quilliascut Grange with the Stranger Creek Minstrels and Penn Fix. As the dances began drawing folks from Spokane as well as Priest River, Colville's American Legion Hall was used more since it was easier to access. One of Bill's favorite memories was in 1983 when New England caller Michael McKerman upon the invite of a friend came to Colville. At the potluck before the dance, it became apparent that the scheduled band was not going to show up. Fortunately, Ron and Fran Kane stepped in. They had moved to the area in 1980; Ron worked for the Forest Service putting out fires; in the winter he was on ski patrol at Alta in Utah. For several years, the Deseret String Band played

throughout the region. Bill called a dance with them at the Northwest Folklife Festival. That Colville dance with Michael McKernan and the Kanes was a highlight for Bill.

That same year, Gerry invited some of his friends from Radost to come to Rice for a concert and dance. He and Margie also invited the Big Foot Folk Dancers from Spokane as well. The event was a huge success; so much so that some of the local dancers formed a Balkan performance group called Tanca, meaning dance in Bulgarian. With Margie and some of her friends playing Balkan music, the Tanca Dancers performed in local events including concerts at the Woodland Theatre in Kettle Falls. While Colville hosted contra dances, Rice sponsored a more diverse pallet including folk dances as well as some contras.

In 1986, Gerry and Margie decided to move to Spokane where Gerry expanded his architectural and construction business and Margie could more easily play for the Spokane Symphony. They both became involved with the music and dance scene in Spokane. Margie played for contra dances. Gerry danced with Spokane's folk dance



Tanca Folk Dance Ensemble

Inspired by Seattle and Spokane folkdance ensembles, the Tanca Ensemble included members from Rice and Colville. 1984.

ensemble Schastye. They both danced at the local contras. And they were involved in the Family Camp sponsored by Lady of the Lake. Gary Miller's first veterinarian job was in Ellensburg; followed by a stint in Spokane; before settling in Yakima. Not only has he continued to play for dances, he also has become a caller and dance organizer. Bill Hewes continues to manage his family business. Margie noted that almost half of her friends remain in Colville where they continue to support the community and play music.

