



North American Journal of the Dances of Universal Peace

Inaugural Issue
Fall, 2002

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The North American Dance Network Meets in New Mexico.

See related story, page 4. Photo by Bob Spencer

THIS ISSUE:

- ♥ INTERTWINING CIRCLES ~
DANCE CIRCLES FROM ACROSS NORTH AMERICA
- ♥ WALI ALI PROFILE
- ♥ DANCING WORDS (POETRY)
- ♥ NETWORK GATHERING IN HOLLAND
- ♥ NETWORK NEWS
- ♥ WHO'S WHO IN THE NORTH AMERICAN COUNCIL

North American Journal of the Dances of Universal Peace

Inaugural Issue Fall 2002

Journal Coordinator: (Kathryn) Sky
Editor: Nirtan Carol Sokoloff
Layout Editor: Kalima Masse

This first issue of the North American Journal for the Dances of Universal Peace has been a pilot project. We are anticipating publishing this journal once or twice a year in the future. If you are interested in working as the editor or the layout editor for this publication, please contact Sky at skyness@frontier.net for more information on the jobs and the application process.

Copies of the North American Journal are available for \$2.50 per copy from the INDUP Office. Payment can be made via credit card or cheque.

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From the Editor's Desk

It's been exciting to play a part in the creation of a new Journal dedicated to the Dances of Universal Peace. I remember a casual conversation about a year ago with Cheryl Darling as we shared a voyage on the Victoria Clipper, where the idea of such a vehicle for the North American Dance Network emerged. How inspiring that through the enthusiasm of Journal Coordinator (Kathryn) Sky and the NA Coordinating Council this idea has been translated into reality. Thank you to all the members and Dance circles who have contributed articles, poems and photos to this premiere issue, and to Murshid Wali Ali for his assistance in the featured Profile.

With this debut issue, we have hoped to communicate the range and diversity of North American Dance activity. As well, this Journal is offered as a platform for the artistic expression of the joy and depth of the Dances. In this issue, we have featured poetry. Future issues may display other forms of expression – through the visual arts, music, new dances, theatre... any of the many ways this precious gift of the Dances inspires our creative faculties. Please feel free to share your thoughts, comments, suggestions, reactions and inspirations in letters, poems or in whatever fashion you are moved to communicate, and in this way to participate in the creation of future issues. Please send letters and submissions to Journal Coordinator (Kathryn) Sky at skyness@frontier.net or at PO Box 4403, Durango, CO, USA 81302 or to the editor's email: ekstasis@islandnet.com.

I hope you will enjoy reading this Journal as much as I have enjoyed putting it together.

Blessings,

Nirtan Carol Sokoloff
Victoria, BC

Journal Coordinator's Note

The Dances express through the hearts and souls of everyone who is involved with them. I have known that as long as I have been around the Dances, and yet it has still given me a wondrous sense of awe to watch the articles and poems and photographs come in for this inaugural issue of the NA Journal, and to see before me those hearts, those souls, so beautifully given to share with others in the network. I feel blessed to have been involved in the creation of this first issue of the journal, and hope that you too sense the depth and beauty of what is so lovingly offered here. May this be the beginning of a weaving that grows stronger and stronger as the North American Dances network continues to grow and expand.

Ya Fatah! Blessings,

(Kathryn) Sky
Durango, Colorado

Name This Journal!

Welcome to the premiere issue of the North American Journal of the Dances of Universal Peace! We hope you will find this Journal both interesting and inspiring, as we attempt to reflect the color and variety of the North American Dance community and the ways in which the vision of Murshid Samuel L. Lewis finds expression in our circles.

We'd like to invite all readers to participate in this creative venue, by suggesting a name for the future issues of this Journal. Ideally, this name will convey our wish to give voice and image to the intertwining hearts of our continental dance community. If you have a name that you feel would be appropriate, let us know! We're looking for that perfect name and the person who finds it will receive a year's free membership in Peaceworks and a small hearts logo banner.

Spend some time with the articles, the poems, the photos in this issue, and see if a name comes to you. If it does, send it (along with your reason for choosing that particular name) to (Kathryn) Sky, the Volunteer Coordinator, at skyness@frontier.net or at PO Box 4403, Durango, CO, USA 81302. All entries must be received by February 1, 2003. They will be reviewed anonymously by the NACC and voted on. The winner will be contacted immediately, and the name announced in the next issue of the Journal.

Thanks for participating, and many blessings!

The North American Coordinating Council for the Dances of Universal Peace: Carol Hanson, Cheryl MacLeod Darling, Carol Nur Allah Orban, Mansur Richard Conviser, Sierra Lynne White, and trainees Rafiq Nurri Yarri Soteris and Mark Kurey.

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The work begun 35 years ago by Murshid Samuel L. Lewis now brings joy and comfort to thousands around the globe. Your membership in the Network for the

Dances of Universal Peace helps this work, which is so close to our hearts, to continue and to grow. Membership benefits include discounts of up to 15% at various Network sponsored events around the world; a subscription to *We Circle Around*, the International Journal which connects you with Dance circles and events all over the world; and a subscription to this new North American Journal, which connects you with Dancers and Dance circles across the continent (and Hawaii!). In addition, you are supporting this network which has added richness, depth, joy and personal connections to all of our lives; and assisting in keeping the Dances joyfully alive by helping the vision of Murshid Samuel L. Lewis to deepen, spread and grow.

The North American Network for the Dances of Universal Peace is encouraging new and renewal memberships by offering a banner promotion. These banners are a beautiful way to decorate your Dance Meetings. To qualify for a banner, your Dance circle sends three to five memberships (any combination of new or renewal memberships) to the Seattle office. Three memberships makes your circle eligible for the smaller cotton DUP Logo; five memberships equals either the large rayon DUP logo banner, or, if your Dance circle received the Logo Banner last year, the hand painted Universal Worship Banner with symbols of some of the world's sacred traditions. Please contact your Dance Leader about your renewal, as the Leaders are responsible for gathering the names and then notifying the Seattle Office and specifying which banner they are requesting.

Membership Renewal methods –

Postal: Send your check, or your credit card number and expiration date, with your membership option, to:
North American Network for the Dances of Universal Peace,
P.O. Box 55994, Seattle, WA 98155-0994 USA.

Website: <http://www.dancesofuniversalpeace.org/na/network/join.html>

Email: NAOffice@DancesofUniversalPeace.org
(Same credit card info. and membership option as Postal)
Phone: (206) 522-4353

Membership options (in U.S dollars; Canadians subtract 30% for Canadian dollar amounts):

Lifetime Memberships
COUPLE - \$7500 one time
INDIVIDUAL - \$5000 one time

Yearly Memberships
BENEFACTOR - \$500/year
FRIEND - \$100/year
COUPLE - \$80/year
ASSOCIATE - \$80/year
REGULAR - \$55/year
LOW INCOME - \$35/year

Membership questions and concerns:
Melody Lubich, (757) 465-8032 or
melody@series2000.com

Membership Committee (Volunteers):
Melody Safia Lubich, (Membership Chair);
Joel Heller; Ayesha Lauenborg; Mansur Richard Conviser



Photo by Bob Spencer

Santa Fe Meeting of the North American Dance Network

In February 2002, the North American Coordinating Council (NACC), the North American Regional networkers, North American Mentor-Teacher Guild (MTG) reps, North American Network for the Dances of Universal Peace (NANDUP) staff and others met in Santa Fe, New Mexico to vision and plan the future of the North American region. More detail on this meeting has been reported in the latest issue of *We Circle Around*. However, since a photo says more than any number of reports, here is a taste of this gathering, taken by photographer Bob Spencer.

Front: Tasnim Fernandez (MTG), Darvesha MacDonald (MTG)

2nd Row: Khusrau Bob Carrell (Canada/MTG), Shemmaho Jephi Sioux

(Canada/MTG), Ayesha Lauenborg (RegNet, MTG), Mansur Richard Conviser (NACC), Sierra Lynne White (NACC), Carol Nur Allah Orban (NACC), Kathy Morter (almost hidden) (facilitator), Cheryl Darling (NACC), Carol Hanson (NACC)

3rd Row: Farrunnissa (Area Connector/MTG), Donna Schiller (RegNet), Dave Nur-al-Haqq Walker (Database/Web), Melody Safia Lubich (Membership Committee), Martha Bracken (office), Tara Andrea Swierkosz (MTG), Nirtana Thompson (Area Connector), Linda Lindsay (Oneness Project), Ananda Hazzard (Financial Manager), Chela Pam Sloper (RegNet), Glenn Harvey (facilitator), Diana Kanoy (RegNet), Ellen Kaf-i-Mariam Fietz-Hall (MTG), (Kathryn) Sky (Volunteer Coordinator), Jess Montgomery (RegNet)

Who's Who of the North American Network (And How To Reach Them)

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The North American Coordinating Council

Carol Nur Allah Orban



Greetings to all North American (NA) dancers! The North American Coordinating Council (NACC) is excited about this new Journal and hopeful that NA dancers will find this a

special place to share news and information, and to weave our web of hearts closer together, despite the vast distances of our geography. For those unfamiliar with the NACC, it is our mission to hold together the organizational side of our huge North American Dance region by keeping an eye on finances, office services, coordination between various parts of our region, and membership. In addition, the North American Coordinating Council collaborates with the Publications Committee in the administration of PeaceWorks Publications and consults with the Mentor Teachers Guild to support the development of Dance leaders and Dance circles in North America. Our liaison on the INDUP Council, Mansur Richard Conviser, helps NACC stay informed of international issues to harmonize our mission with that of the international organization. We spend 5 to 10 hours a month on Dance network business, meeting regularly by teleconference and at least once a year in person. Our work is rewarding – being of service, meeting others from across the continent who have responded to the call of the Dances, and deepening our love and appreciation for the Dances.

We'd like to introduce ourselves.



CAROL HANSON, the President of the NACC, writes, "I wandered into a Dance one night in 1997. Passion fired and they have loved me into wellness and service ever since. I became a Dance leader in 1998, in Pocatello, Idaho, under the wonderful guidance of my sister of the heart, Eve Hart (who led the first dance I attended). I continue to blossom with the help of my wonderful mentor, Darvesha. In 1998, I was recruited to serve on the NACC and continue to serve as Chair. I became Secretary and Director on the PeaceWorks Inc. Board of Directors in 2000 where I also continue to serve.

CHERYL MACLEOD DARLING's first experience with the Dances was at Theosophical Society Winter Solstice celebration in the winter of 1990-91. She then started attending Chicago/Midwest area Dances and Retreats, and a Montana dance camp in 1993. In 1994/95 Cheryl briefly worked as Volunteer Coordinator (recruited by the late Ed "Malik" Dixon) and was quickly drafted onto PW Inc. Board, initially as a trainee. She later served as VP and acting President of Peaceworks during mitosis (the process of separating INDUP and NANDUP into two distinct entities.) On the NACC since its inception, Cheryl has held most positions at one time or another. Her current role is as Interim Treasurer. She recently accepted the role as interim MidWest co-RegNet with MidWest Acon Donna Shiller and has committed to attending Dance leader workshops with Pat Fitzgerald in the Chicago area.

NUR ALLAH CAROL ORBAN, from Ely, Minnesota, dances with and plays guitar for the Duluth circle and travels to the Twin Cities and Madison regularly for Dance and Sufi events. She was recruited as Office Liaison for the NACC two years ago at a Dance camp at the Lama Foundation and joined the Council a year ago. Her role is to oversee the services the Seattle office provides for North America, INDUP, and Publications (with the help of office manager Martha Bracken). Nur Allah is also the liaison between the NACC and the Publications Committee.

SIERRA LYNNE WHITE writes, "I've been doing the Dances since sometime in the mid -1980's, and fell in love and found 'home' at the California Quarterlies in Pescadero. Many years later I decided to embark upon the teacher training path. With Malika Merrill Endres as exceptional and gifted mentor, I deepened in the practice and in leadership skills and became a Certified Dance leader. I started leading Dances, the first in my County, in 1998, and continue to lead Dance circles twice a month. Happily, Carol Hanson recruited me to serve on the NACC at the '101 Ways' leader training in Oregon. There is so much to learn and know about our organization and its rich history! Although I've had to step back from secretarial duties because of a job change, I remain active on NACC contributing in whatever way I can. It is very rewarding to be of service in this way as the Dances are so important to the world and central to my own purpose and life."

MANSUR RICHARD CONVISER writes, "I was first exposed to the dances in the mid-'70s and began dancing regularly in the early '90s. After moving from Oregon to Maryland in 1996, I became a part of the dance community in Charlottesville, VA, which welcomed me into the circle to play music for the dances (on violin and viola). I also began work toward certification as a leader. At the same time I inherited the leadership of a dance circle in Maryland and was welcomed into several others in the D.C. area to co-lead. I was certified as a leader this year and continue to attend camps and retreats, often as a staff musician. I became involved with the NACC early in 2001 and now serve as Regional Networker for North America. I welcome the opportunity to help spread the Dances and their joy throughout the world."

YARRI 'RAFIQA NURI' SOTEROS is the Treasurer-in-Training for the NACC. She's been actively dancing across the United States for several years and is a mureed with the Sufi Ruhaniat International. Rafiqa Nuri is engaged in Dance leadership training and leads *zikr* in her local community, Durango CO. A commercial real estate appraiser by profession, Rafiqa Nuri is a conductor in the Dervish Healing Order and a member of the Ziraat Lodge.

MARK KUREY began Dancing when it was called Sufi Dancing, about 1977 in Black Forest, near San Antonio. He has been doing Kriya Yogi with Yogananda since 1968. He has just started with the Council, so has no definite duties just yet. Mark lives in Grand Junction, CO, on western slope near Utah. He spent two decades in the Air Force Band playing oboe and English horn.

PETER SLONEK writes, "I was born and raised in Vienna, Austria - the city of music- which became part of Nazi Germany, then was liberated by the American Army to become Austria again. The forced changes of allegiance never made much sense and I opted for loving people wherever they are or come from. I feel at home in community more than in a "place". Growing up in Europe, on the losing side during WWII, surrounded by death...my father drafted into the German army and killed in action six weeks before V-E Day... made me into a very committed advocate for World peace. Contact with the American way eventually brought me to the US. I have always been a lover of dance....classical ballet, modern dance, ballroom. Ten years ago Elizabeth found an ad in the Salt Lake paper for a DUP meeting. We went, picked up a flyer for Lava - that was it! I have danced into the New Year in a circle every year since. I started Dance Leader training with Eric and Darvesha seven years ago, dropped out and started again with Darvesha just now. I was active in the circle that started the ONEness Project and edited a couple of issues of the Love Dogs Review. The Dances have taught me (and keep reinforcing) to see our oneness in the eyes of every human being, regardless of the person's shape, color, and political association."



Two articles in the latest *We Circle Around* ('North American Network meeting in Santa Fe in February '02'; and Mansur Conviser's 'Summary of the North American member survey') give some good background about the issues we see emerging in this region now.

Our 2002 goals, derived from these landmark consultations are:

- ♦ Build a budget based on core values;
- ♦ Build communication with MTG;
- ♦ Develop work groups to study key issues raised at the meeting including Structure, Database, Volunteers, and Membership;
- ♦ Look at future structure;
- ♦ Make decisions about database, common server and software upgrades;
- ♦ Create a volunteer pool and train volunteers;
- ♦ Look into insurance for dance leaders and circles;
- ♦ Change dues for Canadians;
- ♦ Update website
- ♦ Help regions and 'clusters' interact;
- ♦ Clarify;
- ♦ Simplify.

Although we have a long way to go, I think we can point to several accomplishments since then. We have the best financial information we've had in a long time and are now able to budget more accurately. Negotiations for liability insurance for Dance circles are in their final stages. Canadian dues have been changed and other membership issues are being widely discussed. Technology discussions are ongoing. Our Regional Networker, Mansur Conviser, is creating more coordination between RegNets, Acons, and the NACC. Some of the working groups are moving more slowly than others, but no issues have been forgotten.

Are YOU interested in working on any of the following projects? Your help is needed to:

- ♦ Determine reality-based geographic regions within North America;
- ♦ Examine technology issues at both the macro and micro levels;
- ♦ Work toward better volunteer recruitment and training practices;
- ♦ Recruit members and provide the services they want most;
- ♦ Learn how NACC operates with an eye to possibly serving on the Council.

Membership in any of these work groups requires only access to email and your willingness to focus on NANDUP for a few hours a month. We'd love to have a broader representation!

The NACC is learning that there is no stasis in the Dance community. We are learning to continually be in flux and adapt to new conditions. The 'mitosis' process separating the North American Network and the International Network three years ago felt, in some ways, like a circle had been completed, but now we realize that our intertwining circles are ever affected by all the others and that to wish for organizational finality is folly. We welcome change as we gather all the input we can from members like you.

PROFILE

Love and Blessings, Wali Ali

An Interview with Murshid Wali Ali Meyer



Murshid Wali Ali Meyer

Photo by Bob Spencer

In this year in which the Dances of Universal Peace Network celebrates its 20th anniversary, the Journal team wished to feature one of the long-time Dance leaders in North America, who has witnessed both the inception of the Dances and their tremendous growth over the past decades. Murshid Wali Meyer was an obvious choice and we are grateful for his cooperation in this fascinating exchange.

Murshid Wali Ali Meyer was born in Starkville, Mississippi, in 1942 and was working on his PhD. in philosophy from Vanderbilt University, when he met Murshid Samuel L. Lewis and became his student, secretary and personal assistant. Murshid S.A.M. initiated Wali Ali as a Shaikh in 1970. Wali Ali is the founder of Khankah Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti in San Francisco and has edited for publication Murshid Lewis' 'The Jerusalem Trilogy' and other writings. A former chair of Humanities at the Tandem School, Wali Ali has recently been recognized by Pir Shabda Kahn of the Sufi Ruhaniat International as the Director of the Esoteric School. The Editor

Were you around when Murshid Sam started working with the Dances?

Actually I remember the moment when the idea for the Dances was born in Murshid Samuel Lewis. Pir Vilayat Khan had just given a talk at Murshid's home in San Francisco, the Mentorgarten, on an experience he had had with dervishes in Konya, I believe, drawing him into the turn. This meeting between Murshid Sam and Pir Vilayat was a time of mutual recognition and choosing to work together. The next time Murshid met with us he said, "We are going to do what he talked about. I can show you dervish dances." And the first dances were born which began with what is called, The Dervish Cycle and then the Bismillah dance. These dervish dances were followed by a number of Ram Nam dances for groups of five or six with partners and so on. Then as he put it, God began to keep him up at night with visions of new dances and he saw the development of the universal offering of all sacred ways, The Dances of Universal Peace. He initially dedicated the Dances to a vision of the Temple of Understanding which was essentially the same as Hazrat Inayat Khan's vision of the Universel, the Church of All.

What was the dance activity like at that time?

The first dance meetings occurred when Murshid took the students that showed up for his classes, which typically were held in the upstairs meeting room of the Mentorgarten, downstairs into the garage. This garage space was actually being used as a garage at the time and I recall a distinct oilslick on the concrete floor. The first dances were done here. It didn't take long for Murshid to take them outside into Precita Park, a small strip of land that faces the Mentorgarten. Before long we were dancing in Golden Gate Park near Hippie Hill and on the Panhandle in the Haight-Ashbury. Some of Murshid's students would join him for these excursions which would attract crowds of onlookers, many of whom ended up joining the dance. The Dances so immediately answered a need that the practice was enthusiastically adopted in the Hippie arena where Sam said he was bringing a message that it was possible to experience joy without drugs. Not long after this beginning, Murshid was already being invited to present Sufi Dances at big events that were occurring such as Holy Man jams and the like. The amazing thing about this early period was that he knew, even when we were doing the Dances in his garage, that by the grace of God they would spread all around the globe.

***Did Murshid Sam's approach evolve over time?
In what ways?***

Murshid used the Dances as a means of training his disciples in Sufism just as he had begun with the walks and also continued with walking concentrations and spins. Yes, he knew the Dances were this amazing generous and compassionate impulse to include all of humanity and he encouraged this spreading, though during the early period he was the only one who taught Dance and Walk. But the inner awakening of students in the stages of the Path was his main focus. In one of his early dances for example he portrayed the Ras Lila dance of Krishna and the Gopis. This was a dance and a darshan combined. In other words he was endeavoring to awaken the cosmic love nature in each of the women whom he took as his partner. Another example would have him leading a line of some of his male disciples chanting Ram and making definite strong calisthenic-like movements in unison with him. Here he was transmitting to those who were open and attuned to his realization of Ram. This would be followed by a Sita dance with women students. And on and on and on. He was seeding in the Dances the transmissions of higher states of awareness which are central to our deepest development. So at the same time as the Dances were beginning to be presented far and wide, Murshid Sam began his advanced Dance class which one had to pass a test to get into. It was here that he showed how deeply he wished his students to go into the practice of Dance and Walk.

What is your own approach to the Dances and Walks?

I like to emphasize the Walks in my workshops and at camps because they are such a unique way to teach concentration and to convey spiritual transmission. Also, in general, my role with Murshid Sam was to cover areas which were not being covered by others. Right now, there are quite a few more highly effective and trained Dance teachers than Walk teachers. I tend to do Murshid's old Dances be-

cause they are deeply imbedded in my consciousness and offer an opportunity to convey something of his atmosphere directly. I am just grateful to have these practices in my life.

What's your perception of how the Dances have grown, spread, changed over the years?

Murshid Sam's Dances tended to be fairly simple movements and heavily rely on the repetition of mantra, traditional sacred phrases from the world's spiritual paths. The Dances now include a broader spectrum of movements, more ornamented music, many phrases in English, and include more folk cultures and ways. These were all trends indicated in Murshid's work, but which have been expanded as more people have been inspired to take up the Dances.

What do you think Murshid Sam would think of the Dance network and the Dance activity of today?

He is very happy that by the Grace of God this blessing of the Dances and Walks is spreading all over the planet and is helping to bring love, harmony, and beauty to more and more human beings. There is gratitude to those who are serving in all the capacities necessary to allow this to happen with joy and devotion.

What do you imagine the future of the Dance activity and network will be, in North America and elsewhere?

The Dances of Universal Peace will become a living force in our world for many years to come. They meet a need of humanity, and as long as those carrying the Dances forward are genuine in their practice and remember to attune to the Source, they will flourish.

Love and Blessings,

Wali Ali



Photo by Bob Spencer

DANCING WORDS



Emptiness (from the Heart Sutra) Munira Judith Avinger

Gate, Gate, Paragate,
Parasamgate,
Bodhi Svaha

(And he is gone, gone to the other shore,
We are gone to the other shore,
Hail the Being of Light.)

High on the invisible air,
a swallow flies.
Light strikes sharp on flashing wings.
Deep within the swallow cells,
an empty dance of energy.

And he is gone?

Cloud mist,
the moon rises orange
behind the summer trees.
Fireflies ?
Light upon light.

And he is gone?

Nights of watching,
waiting sleepless,
as Life unfolds
like fragrant petals.
Softly shining heart of mystery ?
Empty, open, ever present.

And he is gone?

(reprinted from *Lifting the Veil*, Borealis Press, 2001)

Circle Dance Kylie Slavik

The way they whirl,
the way they turn
brings fire to the
earth
but nothing burns.
There is no smoke,
just the rising and
falling
of breath in unison.

Canyonlands (Kathryn) Sky

Let the light cleanse me,
Let the breeze feed me;
Let the stars tickle the colors
of my soul.

Let feet caress the Mother,
Let eyes caress each other;
Let hearts rejoin as One in
this Circle of the Whole.

*Restrainless, Yet Containable;
Nameless, Yet Explainable
Tomas Meyers*

(Our Father who art in heaven)

Unalterable allness which lives within us all,
yet (in its constancy) receives and gives,
arrives and leaves, changes and rearranges instantly
with interwound light and sound;
non-specific initiator of specificity,
and felicitous composite of formlessness;
both beatific brightness and radiant night;
She from whom every he is born; never ending source of
God within the sun and Goddess within the shadow;
phallus and womb in the palace of creations
we are glad that you exist.

*The Lord's Prayer
Zareen*

Oh silent breath of creation
open a space with your sound!
Surround us with fragrance
and exhale your passion
in our every action and dream.
Let us stand on your unmoving support,
reflected in clear waters of acceptance
and washing others with this same delight.
If our attention is conquered by the trivial
you tease and pull us back into balance,
each moment basking in
the divine fragrance,
the eruption of life
and the awareness of all.
From this comes my actions.

Drink It up

Wahiduddin Richard Shelquist

only a moment here
drink it up
and move on

there is no permanence here
this is a place of
coming and going

drink it up
sing
dance
and move on

*Dancing the Razor's Edge
(Kathryn) SKY*

Open a space within yourself
to welcome whatever comes,
expecting nothing,
expecting everything.

Dance the razor's edge in
bare feet.

Ecstasy is joy and pain
mingled together.

Eventually the heart
bursts into a blaze
brighter than a million suns.

Can you believe that?
Dance and let that
guide you home.

*The Dance
Annie Seikonia*

The chants are sacred and ancient,
Arising from the deep well of old souls
In the warm wooden room:
Heart's church.

The circle gazes into itself,
Sways, folds and unfolds
To twelve strings and a drum,
Rising voices merging like a flock of birds.

Bright eyes fearlessly connect the past
With the present,
Sending prayers to the source of light
On the other side of night.

A clear voice leads the way
Through the darkest of paths
To a mystical consolation
Beyond words.

untitled
(Kathryn) Sky

There are no wrong choices
All paths lead home
So lay down your burden
and dance. Or not, as you choose.
Be sometimes a crystal goblet,
sometimes a clay pot,
sometimes so broken
God's wine spills straight over your hands.
Perhaps your tongue needs only to remember
how to lick your fingers clean
instead of crying over spillage.
So lay down your burden
There are no wrong choices
Because all paths lead home.

*Misery Knows How
To Multiply*
Zareen

Forget about
misery.
It only knows
how to
multiply.

Forget about joy.
It comes on its
own.

This is it.

Look at the Flowers
Wahiduddin Richard Shelquist

seekers
wander along
so many paths
struggling to find the Beloved
becoming lost in
prayers and chants
searching and seeking
dances and ceremonies
struggle and suffering

oh my dear friend
look at the flowers
and tell me
what did they do
to bloom so beautifully?



Invitation
'Nirtan' Carol Ann Sokoloff

Here is an invitation: be a child again!
that old dance of "ring around..." and "here we go..."

Give me your hand. Here is mine,
and beside me another's.
Hand to hand.
This is how
our diverse
fragments become
one
heart, a wholeness.

Intoning ancient syllables,
those old sacred names
which spin us
in a coil of radiance,
We breath in light,
exhale only praise!

Joy rises from within
our mindful steps
and balanced breath,
blessing...

O Earth on which we tread
and Sun whose flame
ignites our passion
We bow in awe,
exalt in celebration.

It is love that spirals – a polished stone
which shatters a calm pool,
endless sea of consciousness
while ever-widening unseen waves
persist to distant reaches of the soul,
toward the furthest shore of human longing,
and wash against the feet of the Beloved.

Here is an invitation: be a child again,
for this we do by dancing.

The Guide
Munira Judith Avinger

God's Pudding
Zareen

She speaks of Christ
and a door opens.
I've been there before,
spinning down the path of transmission.
Twelve disciples? only twelve ?
and they couldn't stay awake.

Slowly she turns in the center
as the circle of remembrance moves
one step at a time,
showers of baraka
falling everywhere.

She stops and stillness
fills the room.
Holding energy in her hands
like a cup that catches the rain,
she bows and spills the blessing,
cool on the fire
of the thirsty heart.

(from *Lifting the Veil*, Borealis Press, 2001)

Worshippers have given saints
such a bad reputation.
They want them silent
with long faces
and eyes rolled up in a
pompous trance.

When all the saint wants
is a mad ripping
of clothes
and a night long
roll
on the belly of god's moist laughter.

Don't follow your mind to that place of self
important chanting.
Dive here with us
into this eternal river.

We are warm
and wet like a
new made pudding.
Drowning in god's sweet embrace.

ABOUT THE POETS:

Born in the US, Munira Judith Avinger moved to the Eastern Townships of Quebec in 1992, where she spends her time writing poetry, leading the Dances of Universal Peace and working as a technical writer for a software company in Montreal.

Tomas Meyers, now living in Great Falls VA with his wife Rahmanay, has been writing poetry since the 60's.

Annie Seikonia was introduced to the Dances when she attended in order to write an article for the "Casco Bay Weekly." She now dances with the Portland ME circle.

Wahiduddin Richard Shelquist is a dance leader, poet, and guitarist living in Longmont, Colorado. More poetry "RESURRECTION, mystical poems of longing, surrender and joy" can be found on his website, <http://wahiduddin.net>.

Dance leader, musician and poet, (Kathryn) Sky lives in Durango, Colorado where her work and her service are striving to become one.

Kylie Slavik is a young mureed of the Ruhaniat, aged 23, currently attending the University of Florida.

*Nirtan Carol Ann Sokoloff is a poet, musician, dancer and Dance leader. Her publications include the books *Eternal Lake O'Hara (poetry and history)*; *Colours Everywhere You Go (for children)* and *New Sufi Songs and Dances (with accompanying CD's)*. She lives in Victoria, BC.*

Zareen is a writer, dancer, mystic and computer nerd from Salmon, Idaho. Her website, mysticdance.com, contains more of her wild ramblings.

INTERTWINING CIRCLES

All over the North American continent are many, many circles of light – spreading understanding and love and planting seeds of peace. Here is a bouquet of some of the freshest blooms, each with a unique fragrance and atmosphere – a 'snapshot' of 'the garden' at the moment.

Dancing in the Street in Clayton, Georgia

Celeste Dickson



The Clayton GA Dance group teaching "Spirit of Peace" at a class on nonviolent activism. Photo by Rivkahdara.

The Clayton monthly dance circle was founded in August of 2001 with a commitment to interfaith peace work, and to strengthening our connection with the gods and goddesses of our hearts and with the Earth. Our leader team also travels to share dances around the Southeast at peace demonstrations, interfaith worship events, peace vigils and spiritual retreats. Our special joy is sharing the Dances with people who have never heard of them, and then hearing them say "I could do this for hours!" Our favorite place to lead dances is in the street with as many people as possible.

Leader Team Bios:

Beth René Roepnack has been a student of the Dances of Universal Peace for over four years and is mentored by Akbar Manolson. "After attending the Dances of Universal Peace for the first time, I felt like a glass of champagne that was bubbling over with joy and peace. I knew then that I wanted to share this wonderful experience with others." Beth René has a Masters Degree in Psychology and is a professor at a college in Atlanta. She is also involved with the Center for Nonviolent Communication and Riane Eisler's Center for Partnership Studies.

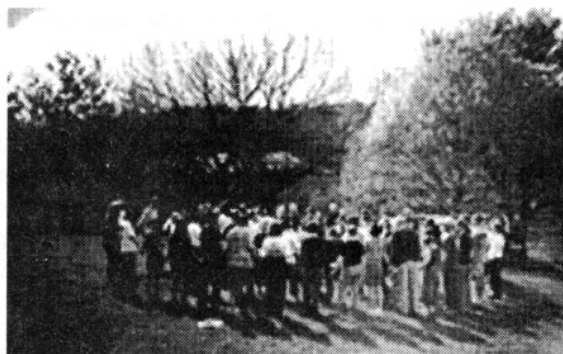
Celeste Dickson has been participating in the Dances for 15 years. She is mentored by Farrunnissa Lila Rosa. Celeste holds a Master's Degree in Social Work and practiced psychotherapy for a decade. Her work is currently centered on

leading Dances of Universal Peace in her home community, at peace demonstrations, and in developing a body of earth-centered dances.

Accompanist Mitch Harris has been playing sacred music for ritual and dance for most of his life. An accomplished jazz and popular musician, providing music for the Dances of Universal Peace provides him a spiritual outlet and an opportunity to subtly enhance the experience of the Dance.

Mitch is a member of the Dances Network and has been participating in the Dances of Universal Peace for two years.

Circle Website:
www.daytondances.homestead.com



The Clayton GA Dance group leading "All My Relations" during a peace demonstration outside of the Y-12 Plant in Oak Ridge, TN, the last full scale nuclear bomb plant in the US. Photo by Rivkahdara.

Portland, Oregon

Beejee Barton

Our Circle is a place where you meet the Beloved in each and every person. Miracles happen and lives are changed through the music, rhythm, words, and movement of the Dances. My life changed profoundly when I began Dancing over a year ago. I am a survivor of an abusive childhood and I've spent much of my life trying to heal from this trauma. Through the Dances, I began to experience rapid healing. I remember one particular night when I felt so full of love – love for the dancers, love from the dancers and love for the

Beloved. And as quickly as that euphoric feeling of love filled my heart, another feeling crept in which left me crying. I felt this deep ache in my heart, one that was both physical and emotional. It was a familiar ache, which in my childhood was explained as the evilness within me. But this time I knew it was not about evilness and for the first time I recognized it as the expression of grief from a childhood filled with a broken heart.

The ache is much like when you've sat too long and your leg falls asleep. When you first start moving, it hurts as the blood starts circulating. This was exactly what was happening with my heart. Once my heart started to feel love, and it began to stir and the circulation increased, it ached. I sobbed for quite some time, with the support of the other dancers. When I stopped crying, I felt lighter, refreshed, and so Loved. I no longer believed in the childhood lie. I was freed from the false notion that I was evil and experienced deep healing through this incredible sharing of love at our Dance circle.

I'm lucky to have a place where the soul/sole purpose of the meeting is to love – love each other, love yourself, and love Thee, Beloved. I can't think of a better place to be. Sometimes when I'm at the Dances I can feel the hearts and spirit of each person in the room as they pour out their love so willingly. And all of our love joins together, and fills the room, the town, and I believe the whole world with a light that is so bright that Love is all that exists. This is what my heart says about the incredible magnificent Love in the heart of our Dance circle.



Chela Sloper is playing guitar, Jemaluddin Henke is playing flute, and Zarina Jackson is playing drum in the center. Photo by Eric Griswold

Thank God for this circle, a haven of peace and place of nurture. We have been together as a core group for over 5 years, and the quality of grace that presents itself without fail (and even with, to a tiny degree) is ever-present. The photo was taken to show the creation of a very inventive member of our community. Working with her own connection to cancer and chemotherapy, she

also took the time to create something special for the group. Feeling that gap of the leader not being able to hold hands while in the circle, she created "extra hands." Stuffing two gloves and tying them onto a rope, these extra hands are tied to the facilitator's waist. Viola! A pair of hands to play the guitar and another to join with the group. It works! I am also happy to say that she is now cancer free and has found a new love in her life....



Photo by Judy Taylor

We wish you peace with all, within and without. Connection. We are grateful to be a part of this community and enriched by your presence. Please feel free to join us every second Wednesday of the month.

The Montreal Circle

Helga Schlee

The quality of this group is sweet connection and divine creativity. Our group has opened itself to receiving input for the creation of Dances. Dances come through as a group creation. I am given the melody and the group then finds the movements working together. We do this mostly in smaller groups, as it would be too difficult if there were large numbers present.

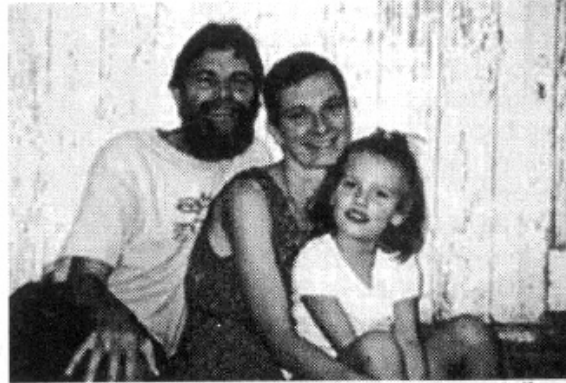
Keeping it Simple: Ohio Dance Circles

Kris Kiko-Cozy and Deborah Chaney

and a story or guided meditation to reflect the season. Nina started dancing in utero and has progressed from dancing in the baby sling to hiding under Kris' skirt while she demonstrated, to creating new Dances and helping to demonstrate. Deborah Chaney and her family are among the most loyal dancers. She speaks of their experience.

"From the beginning, the Dances spoke to my heart and soul, affirming the interconnectedness and sacredness of all life and its source. The Dances have also spoken to the hearts and souls of my children; creating the opportunity to express themselves within a caring dance circle; to share the experience of a global community; to glorify the divine and aspire to high ideals; to honor others and celebrate themselves; to listen and to be heard; to laugh and sing and dance; to imagine and create; and to respect the earth, all her peoples and their cultures.

Like life, dancing with children can be unpredictable. Children's schedules and agendas are uniquely their own, often forcing us to adjust our expectations and perspective. Occasionally, my son,



Kiko-cozy family Jeff, Kris and Nina. Photo by Jeff Kiko-Cozy (self timer on camera)

Dylan, now eight, still takes on the role of the super-hero, flying from one end of the room to the other. 'To infinity and beyond,' I guess higher powers live on lots of different realms. Dylan says the Dances are about 'happiness, peace, kindness, and respecting other people,' and make him feel 'very happy.' Summer (15) says the Dances make her feel 'unique,' 'very spiritual,' and 'more connected with everything.' I know for the past two years and seven months, we count the days until we dance again. We are all blessed by the profound contribution of the Dances in our lives.

Children, and the Dances of Universal Peace - now I can't imagine a life without either."

Twice a month, dancers from up and down the Front Range of Colorado come together to Dance in a very special setting: the StarHouse. Situated just west of Boulder in the solitude of the mountains, this 12-

sided wooden building has been aligned exactly with the stars. Large stone pillars extend its chakras out from the center, conjuring images of the stone circles of England. For over a decade, this site has hosted remarkable gatherings. On these evenings, titled "Deeper Dances," we sing mantras exclusively.

There is less teaching and talking involved. While weekly dances in Denver, Boulder and Fort Collins allow us to come together in community, the

'Deeper Dances' at StarHouse Boulder, Colorado

Scott Medina

StarHouse dances provide a deeper container. We often open with the *Bismillah* Round, and visit many of the different traditions in our two hours together. When the light gives way to the darkness, a large candelabra is lit in the center during the Kindling Ceremony. Similar to Sufi tradition, we light a candle for many of the world's wisdom traditions, including one for "all those, whether known or unknown, who have held aloft the light of truth amidst human ignorance."

The circle can be anywhere from 40 to 90 people large, or more. Most of the attendees have danced elsewhere before, and a good proportion of them are very experienced dancers. This dynamic allows the flow of the evening to not get caught in the Dance instructions. We are able to go further in our experience of ourselves, and of each other. At the end of the evening, warm embraces in the silence continue to carry the peace we have generated.

I invite anyone who is in the area on the 2nd or 4th Saturday of the month to come experience this extraordinary dance space. It's worth scheduling a visit to Colorado around this opportunity! Many blessings to you all from Colorado.

Our circle began some twelve years ago as a monthly dance meeting connected with the Sufi Victoria Centre. Although affiliated with the Sufi Movement in Canada, our Victoria centre has always welcomed Sufis of all persuasions and orders. The earliest dance leaders in Victoria included Basira and Bob Gamble. However, when they moved up-island, Shaikha Nirtan Carol Ann Sokoloff (leader of the Sufi Centre) simply set about to hold a monthly Dance meeting with the knowledge that the Dances offer the most accessible introduction to Sufism for many people. The Religious Society of Friends (the Quakers) kindly offered the use of their beautiful historic Meeting House and since the very first event (at which an astounding forty people showed up) our circle has met in this space and been nurtured by its warm ambiance and the support of the Quaker community.

Being associated with the Sufi Movement, and primarily focused on Dancing as a Sufi practice, our Dance circle has been somewhat unique in that we have collaborated on the transmission of some 25 Dances based on the prayers and aphorisms of Hazrat Inayat Khan. We hope these Dances will now begin to be experienced by other circles around the continent and the globe. At the same time we have warmly welcomed visiting Dancers and Leaders who are always invited to share Dances during our meetings. We encourage anyone interested in leading dances to come forward and offer a Dance (with assistance if need be). Our meetings are simple, unpretentious, joyous yet deeply meditative and moving. Over the years a core group has been established including Bhakti Leslie Moore, Willo Stevenson (both of whom frequently offer Dances), and Amina Diane McCaig (and her greatly-missed late husband Duncan). Instrumental accompaniment is provided by Nirtan on guitar (and occasionally piano) and often Hakima Boyce on tar. Our Dance circle has encompassed the birth of babies, the coming of age of teens and the passing of dear ones. We have laughed, loved, cried, remembered, celebrated, embraced, experimented, and shared our hearts in song and dance the first Tuesday of each month for twelve times twelve times...and our dance goes on! Please join us if you ever visit our beautiful island!

Dances of Universal Peace at Portland Yoga Studio Portland, Maine

Annie Seikonia

hours each way to provide musical accompaniment with his tear-drop shaped 12-string guitar and deep resonant voice. His musical and calligraphic talents have greatly benefited the dances and his sense of humor keeps us grounded.

The next element of crucial importance is the extraordinary people who come to the dances. Each time I attend, I feel an overwhelming sense of acceptance, joy, love and healing from the other people, especially the core members of the dance group. The fourth and fifth elements are the aspects of the space and city in which we dance. The Portland Yoga Studio, located on the third floor of an historic building in downtown Portland, emanates a powerful spiritual aura, perhaps because at one point in its long evolution, this pleasant room with its gleaming hardwood floor was the site of a Baptist Church. The city of Portland itself is an amazing background for the Dances, with its saltwater ocean breezes and prolific art studios and galleries.

The sixth and perhaps most crucial element are the Dances themselves, without which none of these elements would come together. The Dances help us to open our hearts and liberate our souls. A unique configuration of personalities, music, space, nature and spirit combines when we enact the Dances, creating a circular mosaic of wisdom, love and potential that is both ancient and alive. Surely this is the legacy that the Founder of the Dances has passed on to us, which continues to pound in our blood and flow through our veins.

As a regular dancer in Portland, Maine, I see six elements that make our dance circle unique. The first is Elaine McGillicuddy, the woman who founded the Portland Yoga Studio and who usually leads or shares in leading the dances. Elaine is a person of exceptional open-heartedness, vigor and kindness. Her spirit permeates the yoga studio and her gentle guidance and beautiful voice form a framework from which the dances evolve into a magical experience each month.

The second element is Mike Monahan, a practicing Sufi who drives two



Photo by Jan Born



The Durango Dancers, and many friends, at the semi-annual Canyonlands retreat, dancing at Split Top Cave in Canyonlands National Park. Photo by Bob Spencer.

Durango Dances

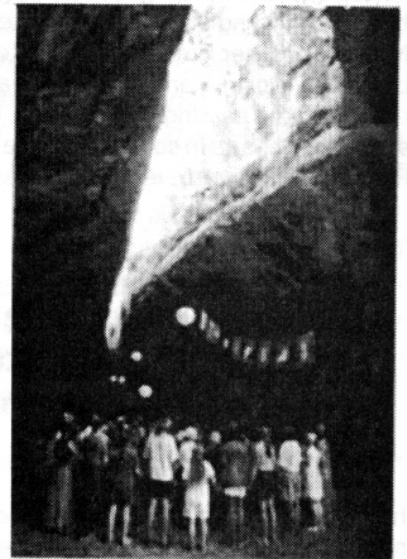
(Kathryn) Sky, Dr. Pam Kircher, and Katrina Davis

The Durango circle now meets twice a month, co-sponsors the semi-annual Canyonlands Dance retreat with Bernie Heideman of Hotchkiss, Colorado, and has enough income to scholarship leaders and Dancers to camps and trainings, and to donate money to causes, foundations, and relief efforts. It is as much a community as it is a Dance circle, as two dancers say:

Pam writes, "I am aware that the circle doesn't just happen once or twice a month, but that it is present in my heart at every moment of every day. To me, the nucleus of our community is the Dance circle that holds the space when some of us are out of town or involved in other happenings. The dancing occurs always. The music echoes in my heart long after the circle. Phrases from the songs come to mind in stressful moments or when I am quiet for a moment.

The fabric of my life is woven by the lingering sound of the chants and by the sense of the dancers moving around the circle, beginning in individuality and ending in a sense of profound oneness. There is no better metaphor for what I wish for the world than the Dance circle where we weave our individuality into universal love and respect for every person in the circle." Katrina adds, "How deeply I appreciate those of you, our Dance leaders, that dedicate your time and life energy to creating this beautiful, blessed, spirit vehicle for all of us to step into twice a month. My words fail to communicate my depth of feeling about this.

One of my challenges is expanding my ability to deeply love others in the agape type of love, rather than being fixated on romantic love. It has been such a blessing for me to expand into Divine Love in the Dances, to fall in love with all the beings in my dance circle. Another big gift and blessing is the opportunity to work with dissolving ego each time we gather. It's so interesting to notice the level where I experience us all as personality-ego-physical-body-appearances-people. And then as the Dances progress, to have those moments where all that stuff completely dissolves and disappears... and I only feel these embodiments of consciousness, being Love, Peace and Light. And then the really groovy moment is when it goes from there into experiencing all of us as One. All I can say is, 'Thank you. Thank you all.' How deeply blessed we are that we get to dive into this holiness twice a month."



The Durango Dancers, and many friends, at the semi-annual Canyonlands retreat, dancing at Split Top Cave in Canyonlands National Park. Photo by Bob Spencer.

Dancing on Maui

Kachina Palencia

The Dances of Universal Peace are alive and well on Maui. Our circles have been going on for over the 24 years that I have known them. Leadership and locations have changed, but the strong spirit of love and unity always remains.

Last month we hosted internationally known leaders Anahata Iradah and Prema Dasara (of Tara Dance fame) Our circle meets the first Friday of each month at the Kihei Community Center at 7:15p.m. There is usually a zikr circle 2nd and 4th Saturdays at the Makawao Union Church. More info: Kachina, 874-7412

Wishing you much ALOHA from Maui.

Chicago-Area Dance Activity

Hyde Park, Illinois Dance Circle

Rev. Nancy Pfaltzgraf and Walia Donna DeMille

The inspiration and initiative for forming this circle came from Malik Ed Dixon. Malik's intention was to bring the Dances to the population of theological students around the University of Chicago as well as offer the Dances within the city of Chicago. When Malik heard I was moving to the Chicago area, he graciously invited me to join him as co-leader of this circle. Thus his dream began to take shape as began this circle in the fall of 1998. We initially danced in the beautiful wood-paneled chapel of the 19th century gothic-style Unitarian Universalist Church. In 1999, due to my connections with the Disciples of Christ and the United Church of Christ, we moved around the corner to the University Church, another beautiful 19th century structure that resembles a medieval banqueting hall. Although Malik is no longer with us in body, his spirit dances with us every time we gather! Although I must travel about 45 miles from my home in Mokena, Illinois (southwest of Chicago) to lead this circle, I believe in Malik's dream and I am committed to bringing it to life! I am most excited that Walia Donna DeMille joins me in leadership whenever she is able to be present. Our circle is small and usually dominated by the Divine Feminine energy, but because we are dedicated dancers, our attunements are very deep. We have even spawned two aspiring leaders! And we joyfully gather on the third Thursday evening of each month to keep "dancing the dream awake."



Oak Park, Illinois Dance Circle

Pat Fitzgerald

The Oak Park Dance Circle began in the living room of my home in January of 1990. It was an auspicious moment in which the six of us who answered the call to circle up were moved by these words of Rumi:

*Dance, when you're broken open.
Dance, if you've torn the bondage off.
Dance in the middle of the fighting.
Dance in your blood.
Dance, when you're perfectly free.*

We continue to be moved by these words and we continue to grow in numbers and deepen in the work of the Dances. Dancing in a major urban environment has its challenges not least of which is sheer size. Our dancers come from all directions of Greater Chicagoland. A good number have journeys of well over an hour by car or public transportation to join us.

When faced with the task of describing the Oak Park Circle and what makes it special, I encouraged our circle of dancers to share their impressions. Here are some of their spontaneous offerings.

"A Circle of light, a living pathway like a labyrinth or circle of stones: intimate, inclusive, visionary, powerful."

"A Circle of blessed beings, fellow cosmic journeyers. An enlightened community very supportive of many spiritual traditions."

"Lively, loving, a joyful gathering! Always a comfortable space with warm loving people."

"Newcomers and occasional dancers are always welcomed."

"Teaching' is integral to dancing. Each week a central theme links the Dances. Limited words: more doing/dancing. The giftedness of all recognized. New leaders and musicians are encouraged to develop their skills. Various leaders during Dance time. Caring spiritual leadership dedicated to the work of the Dances and to PeaceWorks."

"Inspiring team leadership model thanks to founders, Pat Fitzgerald and Margaret MacKenzie, under the guidance of Mary Metzler. Strong Divine Feminine presence."

"Great New Year's Eve Potluck and Global Peace Dance. The New Year's Eve Dance attracts about 60-75 people, all ages, and creates a feeling of spiritual connection in the midst of Holiday celebrations."



**Mokena,
Illinois
Dance Circle**
Rev. Nancy Pfaltzgraf

In Autumn of 2001, I was able to begin taking some small steps toward my dream of creating a center for Spiritual growth that draws on the wisdom of the world's various spiritual traditions. Because of my work with the dances, I named this center 'Namaste House,' since I envision it as a place where people will connect with the

Divine Spirit within themselves and others. As part of those first beginnings, I was excited to be able to offer space to a circle of dancers, who had been meeting one Friday a month under the leadership of Malik Ed Dixon, prior to his illness. Because a daytime meeting is difficult for many to make, but just right for those involved, we are a small group. But it is a great opportunity to learn new dances and deepen in our relationships with one another. It is a special treat to have Anne Kuhn continue to sharpen her dance leading skills as we share together each month. It is a real blessing to me to have this group of dancers bless the work of Namaste House by their loving participation in this circle.

**Small is Beautiful: Blessings of a Smaller Circle
The Evanston, Illinois
Dance Circle**
Carolyn Demots and Donna DeMille

The Evanston Dance circle was founded in 1992 by Carolyn Demots, who was joined later by Paul Bord and Donna DeMille. The first 'version' of the Evanston Circle rented space from the Unitarian Church of Evanston (a suburb just north of the Chicago city limits.) We Danced in an activities room with a mural of light and color vibrating on one wall. This circle and its team of leaders took a hiatus but re-appeared a year later in the same space, this time at the invitation and as guests of the Unitarian congregation as part of their religious education activities. Now the circle is entering its third phase as the day has been changed from second Friday evenings to third Sunday afternoons. It's too soon to tell how the change in time slot will impact the circle.

We have the blessing of shared leadership and with each Dance there is an easy interplay between the two leaders. One leader is always clearly leading the Dance from the center, but the other may expand the attunement or simply give a prompt if needed.

The smaller circle presents special challenges for the leaders. While an attunement for each Dance evening and an agenda of Dances is always prepared in advance, when the number of Dancers present varies widely (from six to twenty, from no men to a balanced number) one learns to trust intuition and attune to the Spirit of Guidance for the running order of the Dances. In a larger circle the energies will blend in, but when suddenly one week, three lively youngsters are brought into a circle of six, or when another week suddenly four new male(!) dancers appear in a circle of ten, plans go out the window and the attunement and sensitivity of the leader must serve to integrate this change in the energy.

In smaller circles, it's also easier to sense the group attunement to a Dance – to know clearly when it gels for everyone; and to know the moment when the Dance passes its apex of energy and is winding down. We can go deep into some very powerful concentrations which can create an interaction, a binding that a larger group might not achieve.

When I moved to the Chicagoland area in the fall of 1998 and discovered that Malik Ed Dixon was leading a thriving Dance Circle in Park Forest, Illinois, only 20 miles from my home, I was ecstatic. But then, when he graciously asked me to join him in leading that circle I was overwhelmed and extremely grateful. Little did I imagine that in such a short time, I would be undertaking the primary Dance leadership of the circle! But the real force that keeps this circle vibrant and alive comes from the support of Pat Segner who keeps the group informed about our activities, handles the physical arrangements for the circle and supplies delicious treats for each gathering. I am excited to be joined in leadership by two beginning dance leaders, Pat Turvey and Anne Kuhn.

We begin at 2pm. every second Sunday with an Abwoon Study Circle in order to deepen our experience with the various Aramaic Dances and the work of Saadi Neil Douglas-Klotz. Thus far we have worked with the Cosmic Prayer

**Park Forest
Illinois Dance Circle**

Rev. Nancy Pfaltzgraf

and the Beatitudes. Then at 3pm. we are joined by a larger group to Dance in celebration of the many religious traditions of the world. This circle still vibrates with the wonderful loving energy of Malik and the blessings he gave us during his earthly walk among us. We are grateful for his energy that so lovingly brought this circle to life.

Dance Outreach in Spanish Speaking South America

James Docker,
Area Connector for South America

Since the founding of the International Dance Network 20 years ago, the Dances of Universal Peace and the spiritual legacy of Murshid Samuel Lewis have gradually spread around the world, creating a small yet far-reaching international family of Peace Dancers. With the exception of Russia, the majority of Dancers come from hard currency, English fluent countries such as the United States, Germany, England, Switzerland, Canada, and Australia. The *We Circle Around* membership directory of each of these countries outnumbers by far the directories of most of the other countries combined.

In recent years, however, this trend has begun to change, thanks to the tireless outreach efforts of a few committed Dance leaders. Two areas, which have greatly benefited from this outreach, are Eastern Europe and South America, both of which have had several Dance Camps and Leadership Trainings over the past few years. In Spanish-speaking South America alone there have been over 10 camps and Trainings since 1998, and more are planned for the years to come. Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Chile, and Uruguay all have new Dance leaders in Training, and eventually these countries will be organized into two new regions according to their geographical proximity. The Southern cone countries of Argentina, Uruguay and Chile are currently in the process of forming the first Spanish-speaking South American region.

The Dance leaders involved in outreach in these countries, Darvesha, Grace Marie, Tara Andrea, Malika and James Docker have all reported feeling very welcome and appreciated by their Latino hosts. Delicious meals, impassioned conversations, new friends, excursions to sacred sites, and warm hugs are just a few of the many gifts we have received from our generous friends from the South. The warm Latino hospitality has won our hearts, inspiring us to return again and again to exchange the gift of friendship and spiritual communion, which the Dances have provided us. As citizen diplomats as well as spiritual activists, we hope to share the gentler, kinder and more humble face of North America rarely seen in the international news media.

And finally, in spite of years of controversial and harmful US intervention in these countries, I believe that good-willed and humble Peace Dancers from the North will always be welcome guests at the table of our Southern neighbors. Nevertheless, if you do decide to attend one of the upcoming Dance Camps, and there are two coming up in January 2003 (see events calendar or contact Grace Marie for the Peruvian Camp and James for the Argentine Camp), I urge you to learn some Spanish first. For a little bit of Spanish and an open heart go a long way in these Spanish-speaking counties. *Viva las danzas!!!*

Since the founding of the International Dance Network 20 years ago, the Dances of Universal Peace and the spiritual legacy of Murshid Samuel Lewis have gradually spread around the world, creating

This is a partial list of ongoing Dance circle meetings in North America. For a more complete list, by state or province, please see the North American Network for the Dances of Universal Peace website, [www.dancesofuniversalpeace.org/na/].

ONGOING CIRCLES

To have your circle listed on the North American Dances of Universal Peace "Find Dances Near You" webpages, please email **ALL** the following information, in this format, to the NANDUP Web Site Administrator, Dave Nur-al-Haqq Walker email: NAcircles@dancesofuniversalpeace.org.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Country | 8. Local Web Site |
| 2. State | 9. Notes (up to 250 characters) |
| 3. City | 10. All MTG Leader Names |
| 4. Meeting Site | 11. Primary Contact Name |
| 5. Meeting Address | 12. Primary Contact Phone |
| 6. Meeting Day | 13. Primary Contact Email |
| 7. Meeting Time | |

If your circle is currently listed on the web but some data is out of date, please send only the data that needs changing. To be listed, a circle added must be led by at least one Certified or Supervised Dance leader who is current in dues with the Dance Network and/or SRI.

CANADA

Edmonton, Alberta; 2nd Mon. 7:30 pm.
Riverdale Hall, 9231- 100 Avenue. First time free then \$4 donation.
Info: May Louise Moskuwich 780-963-1768 maylouiseshaw.ca; Judith Pawl 780-987-4844

Victoria, British Columbia; 1st Tuesday 7:30 pm.
Friends Meeting House, 1831 Fern St. \$3 - 5 (suggested offering)
Info: Nirtan Carol Sokoloff (250) 385-3378, ekstasis@islandnet.com

Kingston, Ontario; 2nd Mon. (Sept.- Apr.)
St. James Anglican Church, Barrie St. Entrance, S. of Union \$5
Info: Connie Brobeck, 613-5437-3307, conniebrobeck@yahoo.ca

Ottawa, Ontario; 3rd Sat. Bell's Corners United Church \$5-\$10
Info: Bob or Marlene Neufeld, 613-594-9248 neufeldm@magma.ca

Montreal, Quebec; 2nd Wed. 3433 Aylmer Street
Info: Helga Schlee 514 484 9314 hschlee@yahoo.com
or Christina 819-562-6191.

UNITED STATES

ARIZONA

Tempe; 1st Fri., The Bodyworks Studio, 1801 S Jen Tilley Lane, B-8
Info: Terry Matthews, 480 775 2671, ttamatthews@talk21.com

Gilbert; 3rd Sunday, The Omega School, 18208 S 154th St.
Info: Terry Matthews, 480 775 2671, ttamatthews@talk21.com

Tucson; 2nd Saturday 931 N. 5th Ave. \$5
Info: Jamia Walter 520-320-5865

Cornville (Sedona area); Last Sat. Contact for directions \$7
Info: Cathryn Tezha Swann 928-634-1696 cathryn@moonsinger.com

CALIFORNIA

Arcata; 1st, 3rd, & 5th Sundays, 7-9 PM Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 24 Fellowship Way, Bayside CA \$5
Info: Ananda Hazzard, 707-826-7575. ananda@humboldt1.com

San Jose, (Willow Glen); 2nd and 4th Sunday Center for Spiritual Living, Clark St (formerly Science of Mind) Donation
Info: Selim Turnor, 408-945-9854, selimturnor@cs.com

Nevada City; Monthly, Sundays Nevada Co. Helling Library \$4-6; Info: Ellen Fietz Hall, 530-478-5855, MorningGlory@oro.net

Palo Alto; 2nd & 4th Saturdays, 7:30-9:30 pm
Unitarian Universalist Church, 505 E. Charleston
Info: Jan Fisher, 650-368-6121, JanFisher@aol.com

San Luis Obispo; 2nd Sat. 7 p.m. Sea Pines Resort in Los Osos (Central Coast) Info: Yarrow Nelson 805-772-3915 ymn1@cornell.edu

San Jose; 1st Friday First Unitarian Church, 160 N. Third Street
Sarasvati Carstens, 408-265-8937 mcarstens@macconnect.com

Studio City; (L.A. Area), Unitarian Universalist Church, 12355 Moorpark St. \$10
Info: Tasnim Fernandez, 213-534-1838 tasnim@compuserve.com

Santa Monica; (L.A. Area) 4th Friday, 8pm \$10
Santa Monica Zen Center, 1001-A Colorado Avenue
Info: David Holbert, 213-534-1838 holbertdg@netscape.net

COLORADO

Boulder; Every Friday, 7:30pm \$7
CUCC Church @ Table Mesa & Lehigh St.
2nd & 4th Saturdays, 7:30pm \$7
StarHouse - 3476 Sunshine Canyon
Info: Timothy Dobson, 303-440-5714

Denver; Every Wednesday, 7:30pm \$7 Temple Events Center
Info: Timothy Dobson, 303-440-5714

Durango; 2nd and 4th Saturdays, 7p.m. \$5-10 suggested
Mason Center, 12th St off E. 3rd Ave.
Info: Sky (970) 385-7375 skyness@frontier.net,
Susan Sheely (970) 382-0979 sss@frontier.net

FLORIDA

Clearwater; 2nd Friday 7:30 -9:30 p.m. \$5-10
Integrative Medicine Healing Center,
Bay Forest Office Center 5770 Roosevelt Blvd, Bldg 300
(Zikr Evening, 4th Friday) Info: Tamara Short 727-523-1247
Peacedancer@givepeaceachance.com

Daytona Beach; 4th Sun., 3 p.m. Unity Church, 908 Ridgewood Ave/
Holly Hill Info: Janice Jemila Felisko (386) 253-2284 Felisko@iag.net

Flagler Beach; 2nd Saturdays, 3p.m. (followed by potluck)
Flagler Women's Club, 1524 S. Central Ave
Info: Diana Kanoy 352-546-1345 kanoy@att.net;
Mary Lange 386-439-6933 peacewkr@bestnetpc.com

Gainesville; 1st & 3rd Fridays, 8 p.m.
United Church of Gainesville, 1624 NW 5th Ave.
Info: Diana Kanoy 352-546-1345 kanoy@att.net;
Mary Fukuyama 352-371-9136 fukuyama@counsel.ufl.edu;

High Springs; 3rd Thursday, 7p.m. Wellness Spa, 340 NW 1st Ave.
Info: Diana Kanoy 352-546-1345 kanoy@att.net;
David Robbins 352-386-462-9066 robbins@gru.net

Miami (Coral Gables); 1st & 3rd Tues. 7:30 p.m. Religious Society of Friends
Info: Hank Poor 305-252-3540 hpoor@aol.com

Ocala (Ft. McCoy); 4th Sat. 7p.m. Dancing Peacock Paradise, County Rd. 315 (Marion County) (call to confirm & for directions - preceded by potluck)
Info: Diana Kanoy 352-546-1345 kanoy@att.net

St. Augustine; 2nd Sunday, 3:30 p.m. Call to confirm location
Info: Tris Barber 904-460-0607 trisb02@hotmail.com

Sarasota; 1st Saturday, 8p.m.; 2nd & 4th Wed, 7:30 p.m.
Rising Tide International, Swift & Grafton
Info: Safiya Slack 941-378-9849 PeaceCircle@cs.com
1st Wed, 7:30 p.m. New College Music Room, College Hall, 5700 N. Tamiami Trail
Karsten Henckell 941-351 5601 khenckell@ncf.edu

Tallahassee; 1st Saturdays, 7:30 p.m.
Unitarian Universalist Church, 2810 N Meridian
Info: Katya & Tom Taylor 850-656-9321 katom@istal.com

West Palm Beach; 1st Saturdays, 3 p.m.
Unity of the Palm Beaches, 1957 S. Flagler Dr
Info: Greg Boster 561-655-1476 Greg@AngelAlchemy.com

GEORGIA

Atlanta/Decatur, Wednesdays, 7:30 pm. \$5-10
Friends Meeting House, 701 W. Howard,
Info: Beth Rene Roepnack 404-377-8832 bethrene@mindspring.com

Clayton, 2nd Friday, 7 pm. Kat Cow Studio, 100 Earl St, Donation
Info: Celeste Dickson, 706-212-2054 solstice@alltel.net

HAWAII

Kapaa, Kauai, New moon, 7:30 p.m. Kapaa Neighborhood Center
Full moon, the north shore - check website for details
Info: call to confirm Timory Koch (808) 635-6129 timoryk@hotmail.com
www.timory.com

IDAHO

Boise; 2nd & 4th Fridays, 7:30pm (not in summer) 1520 N 12th St, Rebecca
Nada Davis, 208-338-1384 nadamusic@hotmail.com

ILLINOIS

Mokena; 1st Friday, 10 a.m. Namaste House, 11113 Bryant Rd. \$5
Info: Nancy Pfaltzgraf (708) 478-8478, revdancer@aol.com

Park Forest, 2nd Sun. 2 pm. Unitarian Church, 70 Sycamore Dr. \$5
Info: Nancy Pfaltzgraf (708) 478-8478, revdancer@aol.com
or Pat Segner (708)748-2217

Chicago, 3rd Thurs, 7 pm University Church, 5655 S. University Ave.
Info: Nancy Pfaltzgraf (708) 478-8478 and revdancer@aol.com \$5

Springfield; 3rd Sundays, 1 pm. Unity Church of Springfield
Info: Naomi Wilansky, 309-452-6613, Naomiwilansky@Juno.com

Bloomington; Saturday eve. (irregular) Unitarian Church
Info: Naomi Wilansky, 309-452-6613, Naomiwilansky@Juno.com

Oak Park, 1st Saturday, 1 pm First United Church of Oak Park
Info: Pat Fitzgerald, BVM, fitzpl4@aol.com \$5

Evanston, 3rd Sundays, 4-6 pm Unitarian Church of Evanston
Info: Carolyn DeMots, 847/568-0588 demots@yahoo.com

INDIANA

Bloomington, 3rd Mon. some special events 1st Monday
Bloomington Unitarian Universalist Church, Fee Lane and the Bypass
Info: Sura Gail Tala 812-336-4050 suragail@hotmail.com

MAINE

Portland, 2nd Sat. 7 p.m. Portland Yoga Studio, 616 Congress St. INFO:
Elaine McGillicuddy 207-797-2151 elaine@portlandyoga.com

MARYLAND

Friendsville; 2nd Tues., 7:30 p.m. Jim's Natural Foods (WiHinape),
132 Walnut St. \$5
Info: Patty Wells 301-746-8526 nrg@gcnetmail.net

Baltimore; 3rd Wed. Govans Presbyterian Church, 5824 York Road
Info: Mumtaz 410-323-6883 mkammerer@jhmi.edu

Severna Park (Annapolis) 1st Sat. (not summer)
Unity By The Bay, 836 Ritchie Hwy, Ste 180
Info: Ramana 301-330-1934 Ramana@mindspring.com

Oella (Ellicott City) 2nd Sunday; potluck vegetarian dinner follows
Westchester Community Center, 2414 Westchester Ave. \$4-\$8
Info: Mansur Richard Conviser 410-489-7981 or 301-675-6105,
conviser@alummi.reed.edu; Peggy Adams, 410-465-1914

MASSACHUSETTS

Cambridge, MA, 1st & 3rd Fri. (Sept.-June) 7:30 pm. \$6-10
Cambridge Friends Meeting, 5 Longfellow Park (near Harvard Sq.)
Info: Auliya Westcott 617-776-5767 AWestcott@aol.com;
Abraham and Halima Sussman 617-491-8694 Sussman@thecia.net

MISSOURI

Midland; 2nd Sat. 7 pm. \$5
Midland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6220 N Jefferson
Info: Paul Meyer 989-799-5033 Paulme220@pol.net

Ganges (s.of Grand Rapids); 3rd Sun. 3 pm. Mother's Trust Interfaith
Center Info: Tom Malcolm 616-975-0736; Jane Sky 616-887-5138;

MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor; 1st Friday Friends Meeting House, 1620 Hill St. \$5
Info: Sylvia Majida Middlebrooks, 734-996-1332, smidd@comcast.net

MISSISSIPPI

Gulf Coast; Quarterly at Historic Bay Saint Louis Depot
Info: Victoria Tackett 228-467-6226, SoundandSpirit@hotmail.com

NEVADA

Las Vegas 3rd Fri. , 7 p.m. (not Dec.)
Church of Religious Science, 5317 Smoke Ranch Road
Info: Jeanne Gutterman 702-631-4160 or 702- 236-9511
zoorevue1@prodigy.net;
Kirsten Barrett 702-242-9541 Kcbinvegas@aol.com

Pahrump, 3rd Sat. every other month starting in Jan.
Winter & Spring 2 p.m., Summer & Fall 6 p.m. Haven Selah,
1680 N. Blagg
Info: Jeanne Gutterman 702-631-4160 or 702-236-9511
zoorevue1@prodigy.net;
Teresa Fuller 775-727-8633 havenselah@wizard.com

NEW YORK

Ithaca, 1st Sat. 7:15 p.m. Foundation of Light 491 Turkey Hill Rd.
Info: Diane Olden 607-272 7582 dianeolden@hotmail.com;
Cherie Botts 607-277-1620 cheradance@clarityconnect.com

New Lebanon, 1st Friday 7:30 pm. Abode of the Message, Darrow Rd
Info: Azad Volkhausen 518-794-8095 azad@theabode.net

Albany, 3rd Sat. Sept. - June, 7:30 p.m. \$3.
Unitarian Universalist Society, 405 Washington Ave.
Info: Farid Gruber 518-392-9718 farid@taconic.net

NORTH CAROLINA

Research Triangle Park, 1st Saturday night, 7:30 pm
Triangle Dance Studio, 2603 Miami Blvd., Durham \$5
Info: Farrunnissa Rosa, 919-361-2383, Nurluna@aol.com

Raleigh, 2nd Sat. 7:30 p.m. Friends Meeting House, 625 Tower Street
Info: Perry Pike, 919-680-3883, perry.hpsd@mindspring.com \$5

Durham, 3rd Sunday, 11 a.m. Wellness Partners, 319 W. Main St. \$5
Info: Farrunnissa Rosa, 919-361-2383, Nurluna@aol.com

Asheville, 1st & 2nd Sundays, 7 pm. Jubilee! Center \$5
Info: Amina Linda McMakin 864-947-5300 lindamcmakin@aol.com Donna
Idol 828-250-0432 didol@charter.net

Chapel Hill, 4th Sat., 7:30 pm Unity Center for Peace,
8800 Seawell School Road \$5
Info: Farrunnissa Rosa, 919-361-2383, Nurluna@aol.com

OHIO

North Canton, 2nd Sat., 6:45pm The Yoga Place
Info: Kris & Jeff Kiko-Cozy, 330-494-9413 kiko-cozy@kiko-cozy.com

Kent, 4th Saturdays, 6:45pm The Kent Yoga Center
Info: Kris & Jeff Kiko-Cozy, 330 494-9413 kiko-cozy@kiko-cozy.com

OREGON

Ashland, 1st and 3rd Fridays 7:30pm Headwaters Building. 4th & C St.
Info: Khalil Elliott (541) 482-4902 mpjamell@charter.net

Roseburg, on request, Unitarian church or location requested
Info: Katherine Jensen, 541-672-7103, kjen@internetcds.com

Breitenbush Hot Springs, Thurs., 7:30pm Main Lodge or Sanctuary
Info: Call to confirm Office 503-854-3320 or
Jamshed Ken Storer, jamshed@breitenbush.com

SOUTH CAROLINA

Aiken, 1st Sat. , 7 pm. Unitarian Church, Augusta, GA
Info: Nancy Vakil Kempf 803-643-0460

TEXAS

Austin, 2nd Tues. Unity Center of North Austin, 9603 Dessau Road. See
map at <http://www.sufidance.org>.
Info: Ata'allah (Bill) Meacham 512-291-4300,
bmeacham@bmeacham.com

VIRGINIA

Lexington, 1st Friday 300 Diamond St (Lylburn Downing Center,
Info: Mirabai McLeod, mirabai@lycos.com

Falls Church, 2nd Sat. , (not summer) Celebration Center of Religious
Science, 2840 Graham Road (corner Lee Highway)
Info: Kathryn at 703-573-1236 SpiralRose@aol.com

Roanoke, 2nd Friday, 7:30 pm. Christ Episcopal Church, corner of Franklin
Rd. and Washington Ave. Donation
Info: Diana Elliot 540-344-6036 dwolf@ix.netcom.com

WASHINGTON

Tacoma, 3rd Fridays Center for Spiritual Living, 206 North J St.
\$7-10 (if able) All welcome.
Info: Farishta Karen Lindsay, 253-396-9656 tacomadup@yahoo.com

Port Townsend, 3rd Thurs. check re. venue and dates
Info: Vakil Forest Shomer 360-385-6114 ziraat@olympus.net;
Christopher Overman 360-385-0655

Seattle, Wed. 7:30 pm. Also 2nd and 4th Sat. 7:30 pm. \$3-5
Keystone Congregational Church, 5019 Keystone Place N.
Info: Phil Notermann 206-781-1225 philn@igc.org;
Zakira Beverly Sensiba 206-361-6926 bevsensiba@aol.com.

WISCONSIN

Madison, 1st & 3rd Fri., Gates of Heaven Synagogue - 302 E. Gorham
2nd Fri., Long Dance Tai Chi Center - 301 South Bedford St. Suite 219
Info: Basir 608-277-0340 kmccullough101@cs.com

WYOMING

Jackson, once a month on an irregular schedule
Info: Alan & Lucinda Willes 307 739 9847 lucinda@wyom.net

Reflections on the INDUP Meeting Holland, June 2002

Mansur Richard Conviser,
North American Regional Networker

About 35 of us (from Russia, Estonia, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, England, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Chile, and the U.S.) met at the Weyst, a peace center housed in a former monastery in the south of the Netherlands. We were hosted by Sid, an expatriate (and vegetarian) North American. Since 'mitosis,' the process that first established the Dance Network as international in location as well as scope, this was the first face-to-face meeting of the International Council. In addition to Regional Networkers such as myself, we were blessed by the presence of many who have given life to the Dances and the Network over the past three decades: Shabda Kahn, spiritual head of SRI; Saadi Neil Douglas-Klotz, father of the Network; Kabira (Zamyat) Kirby, senior Mentor and great supporter of Publications; Ellen Kaf-i-Mariam Fietz Hall and Paula Vigneault who (with Devi de Jardin) helped to shape mitosis; Wahaba Karuna, Tansen O'Donohue, Sabira Christina Schkoelziger, and Darvesha MacDonald, senior Mentors; Narayan Eric Waldman, benefactor from ONEness; and other gifted leaders, musicians, and supporters of the Dance from four continents.

As with the planning meeting for North America that took place in Santa Fe last February, this one addressed many issues. The outcomes of the discussions that took place at both

meetings will help to shape the Network in the years to come. Topics discussed included developing equitable and compassionate membership fee structures (for both hard and soft currency nations), the future of WCA, how to enliven the website and keep it current, how to make publications and recordings more readily available and to encourage the flow of new ones, and how to provide better outreach and support to circles, dancers, and musicians throughout the world. For many of us, it was a first chance to attach faces and beings

with the names that have been before our eyes for many years. Best of all, this multinational, multicultural, multilingual group Danced before and after the meetings each morning and afternoon, and we Danced every night.

More of the specifics of the meeting were reported upon in an article in the last *We Circle Around* (the International Journal for the Dances) by Farishta Karen Lindsay, who patiently took notes throughout. One project proposed at the meeting that is getting underway is to produce a CD-ROM containing the contents of

the first seven Dance booklets, updated with corrections. This product should become available from the Seattle office within the next year. Many of you have heard from our volunteer coordinator, Sky, about ways in which you can become personally involved in helping to build and strengthen our Dance Network. For those of us in North America, there are also opportunities to reach out to our neighbors to the south to support the development of Dance circles and leaders in Central and South America.



From Left: Zubin Westrik (Netherlands RegNet), Mansur Richard Conviser (NA Reg Net), Eric Narayan Waldman (Oneness Project), Shabda Kahn (SRI), playing for Dances at the INDUP Conference in Holland, June 2002. Photo by Bob Spencer

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