



Dances of Universal Peace North America

At this time of year, "turning over a new leaf" or "beginning again" are stronger themes than usual. But in reality, new beginnings can occur at any time. Some, like the birth of a child or the first day of college, are obvious markers: yesterday I was one person, today I'm someone else.

Some are less obvious: who we are the day before the new year or a birthday usually seems pretty much the same as the day after.

Besides the outer signs of a new beginning there are those inner moments of rebirthing ourselves, waking up again - and again - to the new reality of this moment, and then this one. The slant of the light through the kitchen window, the quirk of a loved one's smile, the sound of our breath.



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Spiritual teachings say that every breath is a new beginning, letting God breathe into us and then breathing out into God. Often in the Dances we are offered those moments of total awareness and new beginnings. How are new beginnings serving you at the start of this new year? How do the Dances play a role in this rebirth?

"As life unfolds itself to man the first lesson it teaches is humility; the first thing that comes to man's vision is his own limitedness. The vaster God appears to him, the smaller he finds himself. This goes on and on until the moment comes when he loses himself in the vision of God."

~*~ Hazrat Inayat Khan ~*~



January 15th: Our Day of Celebration and Gratitude

January 15th marks the date of Murshid SAM's Urs, and was chosen as the "birth date" of the Dance Network. Two reasons to rejoice!

Murshid Samuel L. Lewis was the originator of what became known as the Dances of Universal Peace; he also brought through the spiritual Walks and influenced a whole lineage of teachers and mentors. He died on January 15, 1971. In the Sufi tradition, your day of death is your Urs, your wedding day with the Beloved

(Rumi's Urs are celebrated on December 17th, as another example.)

[Click here](#) to read more about Murshid SAM's life at the Sufi Ruhaniat International website and [click here](#) to read about SAM at the Dances of Universal Peace International website.

In September 1998, Murshid Moineddin, Murshid SAM's successor as the spiritual head of the Ruhaniat, when asked what Murshid SAM sought to accomplish with the Dances, wrote, "From one point of view, the Dances are a simple and effective means to actualize devotion and

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New Year's Eve at the Mentorgarden

~*~ ~*~ ~*~

Featured Song of the Month:

[We are the Rising Sun](#)

We are the Rising Sun, a circular (pun intended) chant recorded at a pre-Dance moment at the

Canyonlands Camp, led by Bernie Heideman

[Click here](#) to watch

"Two stories of meeting Murshid SAM"

as remembered by

increase grace, glory, wisdom, joy and peace in people's consciousness. And this is sufficient for the multitudes. From another point of view, the Dances are a gate to esoteric training, the path of initiation and discipleship. From yet another point of view, the Dances are a beautiful expression of the ideal of Universal Worship."

The Dance Network itself was born out of a vision received by Murshid Saadi Neil Douglas-Klotz in 1981. In 2002, he wrote: "As a young student in Sufism, I was on personal retreat in December 1981 and received in vision the message from Murshid Samuel Lewis to start a school of the Dances open to all, collaborating with the best teachers then available." The vision was to begin with a program of residential study for prospective teacher of the Dances, which included the Walks, visiting local Dance meetings and 'cleaning up the kitchens.'" When this vision was confirmed by Saadi's teachers, he wrote, "the only sure way to tell was to try it out."

"And so it went. The International Dance Network as we know it was started first as a 'school,' (then called the Center for the Study of Spiritual Dance and Walk, and based at the Mentorgarten in San Francisco). But after only two years, the inspiration came to re-establish it as a 'network and research center,' that is, an organization whose 'center' could be anywhere and everywhere."

From those beginnings, the Dances have spread and touched the lives of many thousands of people. Dance circles worldwide mark this as a special day. How do you recognize it as such?

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Murshid Wali Ali
Meyer and Lama
Tsering

~*~ ~*~ ~*~

Click here to view a whole page of video, audio, and photos of Murshid SAM and his students' memories of him.

~*~ ~*~ ~*~

Click here to view the Facebook Page and sign up to attend the Live on-line Urs celebration of Murshid SAM at Rising Tide International in Florida on Tuesday, January 14th 7:30-8:30pm EST

~*~ ~*~ ~*~

**Featured Video
of the Month:**



Hazrat Inayat Khan's Urs in February

The Sufi Ruhaniat International is privileged to be the host of the 87th Urs Celebrations of Hazrat Inayat Khan at his dargah in New Delhi, India in February 2014. Pir Shabda & Murshida Leilah Be, with Murshida Halima Sussman and Murshid Abraham Sussman, will lead a program in India, January 31 - February 9, 2014.

Hazrat Inayat Khan was an Indian classical musician and Sufi teacher, who brought the message of Universal Sufism to the west in the early 1900s. He was a teacher of Murshid SAM, and as such is considered one of the grandparents of the Dances.

[Click here](#) to read more about Hazrat Inayat Khan at the Sufi Ruhaniat International website and [click here](#) to read about him at the Dances of Universal Peace International website.

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"There can be no rebirth without a dark night of the soul, a total annihilation of all that you believed in and thought that you were."

~*~ Hazrat Inayat Khan ~*~



For The Beauty Of The Earth

Pir Shabda Kahn teaching and leading "For the Beauty of the Earth," at the Fall Ozark Sufi camp. A beautiful hymn in praise of All, a reminder that every moment is a possible new beginning, with gratitude.

~*~

There are some great DUP videos out there, so if you have a good-quality Dance video you would like to share with the community, please send the links to dupnamail@gmail.com to be shared in upcoming newsletters.

**A Few Dances with
an Attunement to
New Beginnings
God Has Given Me the
Power**

Return Again

**Bismillah Ya Fatah
and any
Bismillah Dance,
especially "We begin**

Sufi Youth Jam in Colorado

Have you ever hung out with the next generation of our movement and marveled at their natural capacity to embody the Oneness ideal? Among those of us between 18-39 years old, there is a deep passion and longing to bring forth those cherished qualities of compassion, acceptance, and profound love into the wider world community. Imagine these "youth," and beautiful beings from the next generations gathering in one place to be inspired and empowered by these ideals and one another.

The Sufi Ruhaniat Youth Council is sponsoring - for the first time - an international Sufi Youth Jam, which will be held April 29 to May 4 at Camp Santa Maria, a YMCA camp near Bailey, Colorado (40 minutes west of Denver), where young people, ages 18 to 39, will gather to meet their beloved peers from all over the world in order to practice, seed connections, and envision the future unfolding of the lineage. Accommodation options include cabins and camping. Anyone, ages 18 to 39, with an interest in the Dances of Universal Peace and/or Universal Sufism, is invited. Cost is \$250 and includes meals and lodging.

[Click here](#) to download and share the flyer for the event.

The Youth Jam schedule will be shaped to include and address the specific interests and passions of the participants. The next generation of leaders and mentors will be invited to share their gifts and teachings throughout the retreat. Participants will be supported and encouraged to contribute to the retreat by leading dances, music, Sufi practices, and by engaging fully in conversation geared toward building a strong community and deep relationships rooted firmly in our shared lineage of Pir-O-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan and Murshid Samuel Lewis. Each day will include Dances of Universal Peace, Sufi practices, instruction in musicianship and Dance Leader training. New leaders will be welcomed, nourished and celebrated in a circle of peers. There will also be plenty of opportunity for Colorado fun! Hiking, campfires, performance hours, drum circles, exploring and enjoying the beautiful mountains. Dancers, leaders and members of the wider community (all ages) will be invited to join us for an evening meal and program so that they may experience the leadership of the next generation.

Dissolving Rebirthing

Go Sweep Out

Beauty Way Dance

Wah Taho! Taho!

Unfolding Zikr

Rebounding Zikr

Any progressive partner dance offers an opportunity for a new beginning in relationship

~*~

**Upcoming Dance
Camps & Events
submitted to the
DUPNA website
from around our
Region:**

~*~

**California Quarterly
Winter Dance Retreat
Jan. 17-20, 2014
Santa Barbara Mtns,
CA
with Tui Wilschinsky,
Yarrow Nelson,
Vanessa Hafiza, Judy
Piazza and local
leaders
Contact:
Vanessa Hafiza Ragan
831-428-5622**

~*~

Merging with the

Cost for youth attendance can sometimes be prohibitive, so communities/circles are encouraged to raise funds to sponsor specific attendees to the Youth Jam. Funds raised for an individual's registration fees should be sent directly to Sára Rain. Travel expenses should be given directly to the individual.

You can also donate to the Sufi Youth Jam via earmarked donations to the Sufi Ruhaniat International scholarship fund. The funds collected by the Ruhaniat will be used to provide grants to youths who wish to attend. At the SRI Youth Council website, www.sufiyouth.com, click on "Scholarships> Donate" Instructions are clear for both online and mailing donations; make sure to add a note saying: "Youth Jam Scholarship."

Young people who wish to apply for a grant to attend the Sufi Youth Jam may apply through the Ruhaniat. At the SRI youth Council website, www.sufiyouth.com, click on "Scholarships>Apply" Another suggested approach is to ask a Dance leader to write a letter about the youth who wishes to apply articulating the need, a brief bio including a photo, and to ask the local community to solicit support through cash donations, frequent flyer miles, etc.

[Click here](#) to view the Sufi Youth Jam flyer, a detailed instruction sheet for how to support the youth among us, and how to apply for scholarship funds if you are between 18 and 39 years old.

Sára Rain has already received a check from the Santa Fe NM circle to pay the registration fee for four participants from Germany! So support and encouragement is out there! If you know of someone between the ages of 18 and 39 who attends the dances, let them know about the event and consider fundraising for them to attend!

[Click here](#) to view more detailed information on the event, including a Paypal link for online credit card payments.

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"But life inevitably throws us curve balls, unexpected circumstances that remind us to expect the unexpected. I've come to understand these curve balls are the beautiful unfolding of both karma and current."

River of Spirit

Jan. 24-26, 2014
New Orleans, LA
with Amina Rae
Horton

Contact:
Amina Rae Horton
504-866-1114

~*~

Montana Family Dance Camp

February 14-16, 2014
Gold Creek, MT

Contact:
Tony Rasch
406-363-3405

~*~

Heart of the Matter Sufi Retreat

March 21-23, 2014
Asheville, NC
with Asha Greer and
Allaudin Ottinger

Contact:
Tarana Wesley
1-828-683-5296

~*~

Wind Spirit Dance Camp

April 3-6, 2014
Winkelman, AZ
with Grace Marie and
Shivadam

Contact:
Shivadam
602-224-0052

~*~

Sufi Youth Jam
April 29-May 4, 2014
Bailey, CO
with Sufi Ruhaniat
International Youth
Council leaders and
friends

~*~ Carre Otis ~*~
Life, Beautiful Karma

Newly Certified Dance Leaders

We send blessings to the newly certified leaders within our region and bow in gratitude to their service and devotion, and in joy at their stepping forward to do this work! This month we bless Beth Basira Fergin (WA).

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Haiku on New Beginnings

New beginnings apparently cannot be captured in words, so we have none to offer.

However, we do offer another haiku on stillness (from last month) and a correction to another haiku from last month (apologies to Narayan).

A single heron
day and night and day stands still
portrait of prayer
~Karen Mastracchio

Narayan Eric Waldman's corrected haiku:

in becomes out, and out in; an infinite point
desist
What breathes now

Next month's newsletter theme is Devotion.
Please send your haiku to dupnamail@gmail.com

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*"Come, come, whoever you are! Wanderer, worshipper, lover
of leaving, come! This is not a caravan of despair. It doesn't
matter if you've broken your vow a thousand times, still
come, and yet again, come!"*

~*~ Rumi (Coleman Barks, trans.) ~*~

***Corrected Link to Last Month's Article:
Announcement to Dance Leaders in the
North American Region Regarding Leaders***

Contact:
Sàra Rain
970-227-5275

~*~

Canyonlands Spring
Dance Camp
Moab, UT
April 30-May 4, 2014
with Bernie
Heideman,
Sky Majida and
Friends

Contact:
Sky Majida
928-536-3307

~*~

[Click here](#)
to view a complete
and detailed listing
of Dance Camps and
Events submitted to
our website from
around our region

[Click here](#) to read
an article in the
Elephant Journal
about the Dances of
Universal Peace
from the
perspective of a new
dancer.

Gratitude for Donations

DUPNA would like to
thank the following
circles and events for
their dana from their
events and gatherings to
help further the work of
DUPNA and outreach of
the Dances. May you be

Guild Fees

In last month's newsletter, the link to view the details for the new process for Dance leaders to pay their Leaders Guild fee was not working properly. Here, please find the article again with the corrected link.

~*~

Beginning January 1, 2014 whenever your annual \$30 Leaders Guild fees next become due you will pay them directly to Dances of Universal Peace International (DUP IN). DUP North America (DUPNA) will no longer collect Leaders Guild fees on behalf of Dances of Universal Peace International.

[Click here](#) to view details on the process.

To see how to access this from the DUPNA website, see <http://www.dancesofuniversalpeacena.org/support-na.htm>

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May you be blessed with an unfolding beyond your comprehension so that you may participate in the re-birthing of our world.

Sincerely,

The board and staff

Dances of Universal Peace North America

blessed in return!

We appreciate your donations and dana. Blessings on all of you who offered support to DUPNA during 2013; may the blessings return to you tenfold.

These circles offered donations within the past month:

Willits, CA circle
Summit, NJ circle
Cottonwood, AZ circle

Although no longer requiring memberships, the organization still accepts voluntary memberships and donations of any kind, which enable us to continue providing services such as the extensive website and these monthly newsletters. Happy new year and thank you!

Two year Dance leader training and deepening with Radha Tereska Buko is starting in April in Iowa; the early registration deadline is February 1st. **Click here** to learn more.



Dances of Universal Peace North America

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