



Dances of Universal Peace North America



Although the days are becoming longer, and there are signs of spring, for many, this is still a time for donning layers to get out of doors. Take time at this point in the calendar for meditation and prayer in this, the heart of winter. The dark

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Dances on The Heart of Winter

Featured Song of the Month: May All Beings in All Worlds Be Happy

Featured Video of the

days of winter are perfect for inward reflection
balanced by gathering in the warmth of
community.

Often, long after a Dances of Universal Peace
meeting is over, the tune of one of the Dances
takes us on a journey. We sing to our self or out
loud, that sacred phrase that has been repeated
for eons, and the effects are profound and often
tangible. We can cleanse our hearts with many
different practices.

May peace of the heart find you in good spirits.
If you have ever thought about becoming more
involved in supporting the circles of the Dances
of Universal Peace, there is information about
volunteering here.

Bless Up! (As the Rastafari in Jamaica say.)

Month: May All Beings in
All Worlds Be Happy

Upcoming Dance Camps &
Events Around the Region

Quick Links

[Join or Renew](#)

[Volunteer](#)

[For Leaders & Musicians](#)

[Find the Dances](#)

*Help us grow our
network!*

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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
blessed in return!

~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

Rose Heart Sufi
Community/DBA Beauty
Circles

Asheville, NC Dance circle

Greenville, Taylors, and
Pelzer, SC Dance circles

Santa Cruz, CA
Dance circle

~*~ ~*~

*We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to
the Phoenix DUP Circle for their help with the
DUPNA holiday card. They were inadvertently left
off of our list of volunteers in the last newsletter.*

Thank you Phoenix!

~*~ ~*~

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Prayer flags and sunset at Lama Foundation, photo by Sierra Salin

Sufis Hearts at San Quentin Prison

By Pir Shabda Khan (September 2014), slightly abridged

A few months back, Susan Shannon, a Chaplain at San Quentin Maximum Security Prison, wrote to me requesting we bring our Sufi music and dance to the prisoners in San Quentin. She had attended our Zikr Circle at the former Fairfax location many times, and was eager to bring that into the prison.

Thinking we would have the opportunity to do the Dances of Universal Peace with the prisoners, I invited Perry Pike, Fazl Olivier and Bhavani Tucker. Through San Quentin's lengthy process of clearance to enter the grounds, we received permission for ourselves and our instruments. We were given a strict dress code, no blue or orange shirts, no jeans, no open toes footwear, no hats except for religious purposes. No phones, no metal objects except car keys, only a driver's license; all else was locked in our cars.

On Sunday September 14, 2014 we met our host, Susan, at the entrance to San Quentin. As the first guard went through his protocol of registering our arrival, he informed us that the system had failed us and our instruments weren't registered; we would have to leave them behind. Luckily they did have guitars and a drum we could use.

Through the first checkpoint, then on to the next, clang, clang the sound of metal doors opening and closing behind us, and then one more checkpoint and we were in.

We walked through an open courtyard, where there were

Nelson B.C.
Dance circle

Joyful Journey Dance retreat
in Colorado

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

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.

Please click here to make a donation to support and further enliven the work of DUPNA. Thank you!

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Did you know that your local circle can become a chapter of DUPNA and gain non-profit status? Check the website for more information.

~*~ ~*~ ~*~

A Few Dances with an Attunement to 'The Heart of Winter'

several prisoners, to the Catholic Chapel, generously offered as a place for Interfaith gatherings and music by Father Williams. The inmates who attended had earned the right to be part of this gathering by good behavior.

We were sad to learn that we would not be able to lead the Dances, just be the Sufi musicians. We sat in front on a slightly raised stage, four microphones, Bhavani and I on guitars, Perry on djembe, Fazl joining us. The inmates sat in the pews.

I began telling Nasruddin stories, that what we are looking for is within us, "closer than the jugular vein."

Early on, we dropped into a deeper level; I spoke about how sober we felt for the inmates leading such a restricted and often dangerous life with so many human limitations and lack of personal freedom.

Fazl led us in Drink with the Beloved, an intoxicating song written by Allaudin and Yasmin Ottinger. He spoke about the metaphor of the tavern that the Sufis use, about lover and Beloved.

Perry brought out the deep roots of southern gospel combined with an "English zikr" ~ Glory Glory, Hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down ~ Nothing, Only God ~ Nothing, Only God. With each song more inmates joined us singing.

On to the Zimbabwe Zikr, as the juices began to flow and the room grew warmer.

Some of our deepest moments unfolded as we made time for questions and answers. I spoke about learning to be horizontally enclosed, but vertically free. How we go in circles searching for happiness outside, for the right circumstances, until we finally realize that this is an inexperienced expectation. When we come to our senses, we realize that the only true source of happiness is within us.

More than anything, we all experienced deep communion.

We spoke of how privileged we felt to be able to come and share, recognizing the challenging life of being incarcerated.

I found the men who joined us radiant and present - sincere faces and beautiful smiles - more than many who have all the freedoms of the outer world.

Some spoke of how they had made peace with their situations and used it as a tool for bettering their lives and serving others. One inmate said, "We have it easier

**The Earth that is
Wise and Old**

Shaddai

**Kali
Metamorphosis**

Tashi Delek

**Thy Light is in All
Forms**

Ashem Vohu

Altsimo Corazon

**Be Still and Know
that I Am God**

**Go Sweep Out the
Chambers of Your
Heart**

**The Mantra Dance
of Tara.**

~*~*~*~

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**Featured Song
of the Month:**

than you on the outside, we have more freedom since we have much less to worry about, fewer decisions to make."

Then an inmate named Seth spoke up: "I think I am the only Sufi in San Quentin and the oldest person here. These are the words of my Murshid, Toward the One, the Perfection of Love Harmony and Beauty."

"How old are you?" I asked. "I'm 79," he answered. "And who is your Murshid?" I said. "Murshid Samuel Lewis!" he replied. I was delighted and amazed since Murshid Samuel Lewis is my own teacher. I responded, "Did you actually meet him?"

"Yes, I met him a year after he died!"

We closed with Ishq Allah Mabud Allah, sang May All Beings be Well and Happy, and then found we had a few more minutes before the inmates had to return for their evening roll call. Through some cajoling we got permission to Dance, formed two concentric circles and danced: Allah, Allah Allah, Allah, Hayy Hayy Hayy Hayy Hu!

Susan emailed us the next day, "The men LOVED you all, and your presentation was so perfect for what we are trying to offer."

[Click Here](#) to download the complete article

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Newly Certified Dance Leaders

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

*Amir Nicholas Baker (NM, USA)
Gaea Van Breda (WA, USA)*

Volunteers: The Heartbeat of the Network

If you wish to help with any of the following needs and

May All Beings in All Worlds Be Happy

originated by
Wonder Bob

Wonder Bob shares
about this mantra:

"I perceive Loka as a dimension. Acknowledging that we are Multi-dimensional beings, we are singing to ourselves as well as others beyond this reality. It's as if we invite everyone to come play then stitch a new possibility through the dance."

Featured Video
of the Month:

~*~



May All Beings in all Worlds be Happy

Originated by Wonder Bob,
Led by Sky Majida Roshay

~*~

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.

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Upcoming Dance

are interested in serving the Dances in North America, please make contact.

Looking for New Website Manager - Shivadam, who has been managing the DUPNA website since 2009, completes his service on the NA Board this year and is willing to help train a website-skilled volunteer to learn to edit and manage the NA website.

Help with the Bi-monthly Newsletter
Contact Anjahli at - anjahliparnell@gmail.com

- Another volunteer to join the writing and editing would be welcome.

- Layout Volunteer - Work with Jen, who currently does the newsletter layout, and use MailChimp to complete the layout.

- Submit articles and photos or help with editing.

Help with the annual Holiday Card by:
Sourcing artwork (anytime before October)
Doing the layout (October)
Coordinating Dance circles to
Hand-write labels and Mail out this inspirational card (October and November)

Notating Dance Write-ups - Working with Finale or other notating software.

New Board Members - As board members complete their service, we are on the lookout for volunteers with skills such as:

Computer skills and email ability

Social networking

Fundraising

Public relations skills in networking and writing

Outreach Projects

Developing ways to support Dance Circles in the region

An Open Heart!

[Click here](#) to contact DUPNA for more information.

From Sky Majida, previously the Volunteer Coordinator and Recording Secretary for Dances of Universal Peace, North America region, *"When I took this job, I didn't know much about the region and I had no idea what I was getting into. Now I have Dance friends all across the continent. I learned that when we take on a new role, it can lead us to places and situations we never would have expected to go, and that when we're open to it, it brings us to new heights of growth and joy that we never imagined when we first said 'yes'. I feel so blessed because of my work for the Dances."*

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

Arise Drum Workshop
with Ginger Nuria Lee
March 20-22
Portland, OR
Contact:
[Ginger Nuria Lee](mailto:GingerNuriaLee@gmail.com)
[406-586-2215](tel:406-586-2215)

~*~

Pathways to Awakening
with Yaqin Lance
Sandleben and Barakat
Carolynn Bryan
March 20-21
Prescott, AZ
Contact:
[Armaiti Nancy Ethridge](mailto:ArmaitiNancyEthridge@gmail.com)
[928-776-8974](tel:928-776-8974)

~*~

Awakening Joy and
Compassion: Integrating
Limitless Freedom with the
Impermanence of Everyday
Life
with Pir Shabda Kahn
March 20-22
Asheville, NC
Contact:
[Tarana Wesley](mailto:TaranaWesley@gmail.com)
[828-683-5296](tel:828-683-5296)

~*~

Dances of Universal
Peace with Jemila
Felisko
March 27-April 5
Oroville, CA
Contact:
Rev. Judi Elia
[530-533-8696](tel:530-533-8696)

~*~

Wind Spirit Dance Camp
with Darvesha, Tara
Andrea, and Shivadam
April 2-5
Winkelman, AZ
Contact:
[Shivadam Adam Burke](mailto:ShivadamAdamBurke@gmail.com)

~*~

**Active Hope-
Dancing the Spiral**
with Amina, Arif, and Carol
and Paula
April 3-5
Deerfield, MA
Contact:
Arif Leininger
978-502-0247

~*~

**Dancing Hearts Retreat-
Dancing with the Beloved**
April 17-19
Geyserville, CA
Contact:
Violetta Reiser
415-821-0939

~*~

Live at Lava Spring 2015
April 24-26
Lava Hot Springs, ID
Contact:
Connie Zareen
208-756-3076

~*~

**Chant and Dance Retreat
with Sára Rain and Jonas
Koukl**
April 24-26
Bailey, CO
Contact:
Sára Rain
970-227-5275

~*~

**Spring Canyonlands Dance
Camp**
with Sky Majida and Bernie
Heideman
April 29-May 4
Moab, UT
Contact:
Sky Majida
928-536-3307

~*~

**Pathway to the Awakened
Heart: A Dance Deepening
Retreat**
with Halima and Abraham

Perhaps volunteering for the Dance network would open up similar blessings and opportunities for you.

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"In Winter we enter into the depths of silence, peace, repose, patience and discover the ever glistening light deep within the dark womb of being. This is a time for spaciousness; there is naturally less focus on outer form and more on inner depth. The seed is buried deep within the dark depths of the earth and nurtured there. The state of the seed is the ether state; all the elements are together undifferentiated, in the state of unknowing, the midnight sun, faith beyond form."

~*~ *Hazrat Inayat Khan* ~*~

Haiku on The Heart of Winter

winter wind
old house
a conversation

today
I could skate
on yesterday's rain

snow in the wind
dreams of spring
too late too early

~munira judith avinger

Snow day, warm kids, fire.
This pause so good for the soul
floats in soft like flakes.

~Lezlie Zaynab Ward

Next month's theme is Ecstasy.
Send your haiku to dupnemail@gmail.com

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"Silence is painful, but in silence things take form, and we must wait and watch, In us, in our secret depth, lies the knowing element which sees and hears that which we do not see nor hear. All our perceptions, all the things we have done, all that we are today, dwelt once in that knowing, silent depth, that treasure chamber in the soul. And we are more than we think. We are more than we know. That which is more than we think and know is always seeking and adding to itself while we are doing nothing - or think we are doing nothing. But to be conscious of what is going in our depth is to help it along. When subconsciousness becomes consciousness, the seeds in our winter-clad-selves turn to flowers, and the silent life in us sings with all its might."

~*~ Kahlil Gibran ~*~

~*~ Beloved Prophet: The Love Letters ~*~



Children basking in the glow at Live at Lava Dance camp

Introducing the Dances to New Populations: Upcoming Teleconference

by Jane Sky

In this online conversation we will share our adventures with leading the Dances of Universal Peace in various places. The facilitators will begin by sharing some of their own experiences and then open the conversation to the other participants. It would be advantageous to learn about what worked well, what challenges we faced and what we learned from those challenges.

**Sussman
May 8-10
Vashon Island, WA
Contact:
Lesley Florer
and Farishta
253-882-7166**

~*~

**Inland Northwest Sufi
Camp
May 22-25
Lake Coeur d'Alene, ID
Contact:
Barbara Tara Bent
509-838-0340**

~*~

**Ozark Sufi Camp
with Darvesha and Asha
Greer
May 22-27
Lake of the Ozarks, MO
Contact:
Angela Gayan Galik
612-702-4535**

~*~

**Life as Our Teacher
with Pir Shabda Kahn
June 6-7
Portland, OR
Contact:
Ananada Mariam Simmons
503-939-2711**

~*~

**Northern Colorado Dances
of Universal Peace and Sufi
Camp
with Grace Marie and
Bernie Heideman
June 11-14
Berthoud, CO
Contact:
Jim Grant
970-226-8767**

~*~

**The Path of the Awakened
Heart
with Abraham and Halima
Sussman
June 12-14
Prama Institute
Marshall, NC
Contact:**

Wilderness Dance Camp
with Amida Harvey and
friends
June 21-27
Flathead Lake, MT
Contact:
[Misty Harding](#)
[406-209-3857](tel:406-209-3857)

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

Several of my most interesting experiences with new dancers have been at outdoor music festivals which vary in size from 500 to 5,000 attendants. At some we have had stages to use or we've been inside large tents. At others we've been on the edge of a parking lot dancing on a hilly, grassy slope! We've had 8 to 50 people in these circles. We usually have the early morning slot before the bands begin. Over the years we've developed our list of "festival dances". We know that this particular population will relate well with dances from the Native American tradition. However, we try to share from as many traditions as possible, choosing the more fun and joyful dances to begin our "set" and gradually introducing deeper, meditative dances. Favorites: E Malama, Ancestors Sky People, This Little Light of Mine, Peaceful Steps, Spirit of Peace, Beautyway, Altisimo Corazon, Thy Light is in All Forms...and many more.

Elementary schools present many blessings and also, at times, difficulties. Keeping a group focused can be problematic, but sometimes the most difficult thing is just getting the kids to hold hands! It is amazing to see the effects of the music, melodies and lyrics on the children. Of course they love the spirit of Wishita. Often they can get very relaxed and mellow hearing the gentle songs. After one long day of going to one event after another and coming to the DUP last, a whole group of kindergarteners lay on the floor of the gym and just listened to me. They were charmed by the sweetness and energy of the chants.

People have led dances in prisons, mental health facilities, with Elders in nursing homes or assisted living centers, and, I would guess, hundreds of other places. A huge opportunity on the horizon is for a group to lead dances at the Parliament of World Religions coming up later this year. Some folks may want to talk about dancing with friends or a small group in an unusual setting. Seven of us recently swam the dances in a Mexican Cenote. Now there's a story!

Please contact Jane Sky at skyjane55@yahoo.com if you would like to share on the panel.

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*"And don't think the garden
loses its ecstasy in winter.
It's quiet, but the roots
are down there riotous.*

~*~ Rumi ~*~

Sincerely,
The board and staff
Dances of Universal Peace North America



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Through the first checkpoint, then on to the next, clang, clang the sound of metal doors opening and closing behind us, and then one more checkpoint and we were in.

We walked through an open courtyard, where there were several prisoners, to the Catholic Chapel, generously offered as a place for Interfaith gatherings and music by Father Williams. The inmates who attended had earned the right to be part of this gathering by good behavior.

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