



MINUTES OF THE FOLKDANCE FEDERATION OF CALIFORNIA, SOUTH COUNCIL MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

The council meeting of the Folkdance Federation of California, South was held on **December 14, 2025** virtually via Zoom. It began at 9:32 a.m. and was presided over by President Solloway.

ATTENDEES

Officers: President, Greg Solloway; Vice President, Chin Yu; Treasurer, Mindy Belli; Secretary, Margaret Lange; Insurance Chair, Julith Neff; Historian, Wen-Li Chiang; Sergeant-at-Arms, Terry Guwca; Parliamentarian, Marshall Cates

Standing Committee Chairs: Budget & Finance, Marshall Cates; Fall Camp, Terry Guwca

Past Presidents: Diane Baker and Marshall Cates

Associate Members: Steve Himel

Club Delegates: Bay Osos Dancers, Margaret Lange; Cerritos Folk Dancers, Wen-Li Chiang; Conejo Valley Folk Dance, Paula Davis; International Folk Dancers of Laguna Woods, Terry Guwca; Laguna International Dancers, Greg Solloway; Pasadena Co-op, Marshall Cates; Narodni International Folkdancers, Julith Neff; San Diego Folk Dance Center, Mary Marshall; Vintage Israel, Jim Rothman; Westside Folkdancers, Sandy Helperin

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: A motion to approve as written the minutes of the previous council meeting on September 7, 2025 was made by Julith Neff and seconded by Mary Marshall. The motion carried.

ELECTED OFFICER REPORTS

President Greg Solloway

President Solloway reported that last quarter was busy with festivals and workshops including Filip Filipov accompanied by Mary Marshall in San Diego, Ojai Day of Dance, Fall Camp, and the Armenian workshop that Conejo Valley Folk Dance hosted.

Vice President Chin Yu

Vice President Yu reported that an application was received from Pasadena Co-op for funding of their annual Winter Festival (January 24, 2026, at St. James Episcopal Church). Vice President Yu asked for a motion to approve the festival.

MOTION: Diane Baker moved that the Federation sponsor the Pasadena Co-Op's Winter Festival. Paula Davis seconded. All approved. The motion carried.

Upcoming Federation-sponsored events:

1. Cerritos Lunar New Year Party – February 21, 2026
2. Laguna Festival – March 6 to 8, 2026, Daniel Sandu & Anna Angelkova teachers
3. Cerritos Anniversary Festival – May 16, 2026

Discussion: Wen-Li Chiang elaborated on the Cerritos Lunar New Year Party: it will start with a Lion Dance; they have invited Tom Bozigian and Sheree King to teach workshops.



Treasurer Mindy Belli

Treasurer Belli presented and reviewed the following reports to the council: Treasurer's Report – Fiscal Year 2025-2026; Fall Camp 2025 Income, Expense, Net; and 2026 Club Memberships (reports are attached). She noted that the two checking logs agreed with the bank account balances; expenditures were the usual with Ojai Day of Dance and scholarships; a lot of club memberships are pending; we did get some associate memberships and donations; the Federation has approximately \$113,000 of assets, not including the Fall Camp account (see separate Fall Camp report); insurance premiums are a pass-thru, not income.

Discussion: Members showed appreciation for the membership report, particularly that it includes the number of members in each group. The cost to rent the Art Center in Ojai for the Ojai Day of Dance is at the low price of \$500 as a result of our Federation member, Carol Smith, being a member of the Art Center; otherwise the cost would be \$1,000.

APPOINTED OFFICERS' REPORTS

Insurance Chairperson, Julith Neff

Chairperson Neff stated that she is keeping up with all requests, and that there is one new member coming on board.

Discussion: Diane Baker noted she will be completing the National Folk Organization applications for clubs applying for insurance through the Federation. She has received the applications from Amy Dale and she will submit them to NFO; they are due at the end of January.

Membership Chairperson, Amy Dale

Chairperson Dale was not present. President Solloway said Amy reported to him that all applications have been received for 2026 and these have been passed on to Diane Baker. Treasurer Belli noted that the new system of processing membership funds is working well for her and she recognized the efforts of Chairperson Dale in encouraging renewals and soliciting donations.

Sergeant-at-Arms, Terry Gucwa

A quorum was met.

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

Fall Camp at Brandeis University Campus, Terry Gucwa

Terry submitted and reviewed two reports: Fall Camp 2025 Closing Report, and Thoughts for a Future Fall Camp (reports attached). He noted the following: Attendance was light with 51 instead of the target attendance of 60. There was a net loss of \$3,759; the loss would have been approximately \$6,000 were it not for donations. Reaction to the four local teachers who taught dances learned from summer dance camps was positive. Many people expressed that they hoped that a Fall Camp would be held in 2026. Terry will send a survey to attendees capture reactions and suggestions. Regarding Fall Camp 2026, the deposit is due now and is refundable 91 days before start of camp.

Treasurer Belli reviewed the financial status of camp with reference to her Fall Camp 2025 Income, Expenses, and Net (attached).

Finance, Marshall Cates

Marshall reported that the finance committee has not met.



Scholarships, Carol Smith

Carol Smith was not present. Treasurer Belli noted that three scholarships have been awarded, all to members who dance with federation clubs. One of the scholarship payments is pending.

Scene, Michael Wright

Michael stated that the publication process is coming along. President Solloway noted that there are three weeks left to submit articles for the February issue. The submission deadline is January 10, 2026.

Secretary's note: items for publication in *Scene* such as photographs, articles, and event information, may be sent to Michael Wright, *Scene* Editor, michael@theresultsgroup.com, 707-484-4022.

Visiting Master Teachers, Jay Michtom

Jay Michtom was not present. President Solloway noted that there is a revised date for the celebratory luncheon in honor of Jay and Jill Michtom. It will be held at P.F. Changs in Sherman Oaks on February 7, 2026 at 11:30. He asked that attendees share the flyer (attached) with their clubs.

AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach Committee

President Solloway reviewed the recent outreach activity (report attached):

The event in November 5th at the Irvine Multicultural Assembly was attended by 60 to 70 people. It included a presentation about recreational folk dancing, demonstration dances, audience participation dances, Interfolk played live music, DEBA performed dances, and Marge Gajicki presented dolls in traditional costumes, and actual costumes were on display. It was a well-received event and the committee is hoping some of the attendees will attend other events; follow-up will be assisted by email lists from registration. About \$350 was spent on the event. One of the members of the senior center asked if we could start a folk dance class and this is under consideration.

Diane Baker has completed her successful Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLI) semester classes at Cal State University, Long Beach, averaging 20 to 24 attendees, and will continue through the upcoming winter quarter.

Paula Davis and the Conejo Valley dancers hosted a successful Armenian dance workshop.

Regarding plans for another Nevenka concert, they likely can't do another outreach event this year as they already have an anniversary concert set. Paula Davis volunteered to liaison with them to encourage another Federation-sponsored concert.

Changing the status of the outreach committee from ad hoc to standing was discussed later; see New Business.

OLD BUSINESS

Ojai Day of Dance Report

Carol Smith was not present. President Solloway noted that the event was successful and that Joan Hantman and Marc Rayman did terrific job of teaching. Approximately 35 people attended.

Conejo Valley Folk Dancers' Armenian Workshop

Paula Davis reported that the workshop was attended by 40 dancers, 50 percent of whom were not members of her club. She had reached out to the local Armenian community. The teacher was Naomi Eshoo who lives in Ojai. Naomi has taught at the Mendocino Middle Eastern Camp for ten years. She called her dances "Armenian picnic" dances, more party dances instead of performance dances, related to living folklore. Paula would like Naomi to be considered as a teacher for Ojai Day of Dance.



Conejo Valley Folk Dancers’ Armenian Workshop

Paula Davis reported that the workshop was attended by 40 dancers, 50 percent of whom were not members of her club. She had reached out to the local Armenian community. The teacher was Naomi Eshoo who lives in Ojai. Naomi learned from Tom Bozigian and she taught at the Mendocino Middle Eastern Camp for ten years. She called her dances “Armenian picnic” dances, more party dances instead of performance dances, related to living folklore.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposal to change the status of the ad hoc Outreach Committee to a standing committee

MOTION: Mindy Belli moved that the outreach committee be transferred to a standing committee status. Diane Baker seconded. None were opposed. The motion carried.

Discussion: Establishment of a new standing committee entails a change in the bylaws. The committee needs to be populated; members should be recruited from the Federation dance clubs.

Should we pay the deposit for Fall Camp 2026?

MOTION: Mindy Belli moved that the Federation pay the deposit for Fall Camp 2026. Greg Solloway seconded. None were opposed. The motion carried.

Discussion: A Fall Camp chairperson should be appointed soon and a “save the date” announcement should be sent expeditiously.

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS CARRIED

1. That the minutes of the previous council meeting on September 7, 2025 be approved as written.
2. That the Federation sponsor the Pasadena Co-Op’s Winter Festival.
3. That the outreach committee be transferred from ad hoc to a standing committee status.
4. That the Federation pay the deposit for Fall Camp 2026.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nominations are being solicited for the Southern California International Folk Dance Lifetime Achievement Award. Nominations should be sent to Marcella Lawson at marcellajk@gmail.com by February 1, 2026.

FUTURE MEETING DETAILS

The next council meeting of the Folkdance Federation of California, South was set for Sunday, March 15, 2026, at 9:30 a.m., virtually via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

The council meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m.

Margaret Lange

December 18, 2025

Secretary
Folkdance Federation of California, South

Date Submitted

March 15, 2026

Date of Approval

Fall Camp 2025 - Closing Report to the Folk Dance Federation of CA, South

For the Federation's Quarterly Council Meeting, December 14, 2025

To Members of the Council:

The Federation's Fall Camp 2025 was successfully conducted at the Brandeis-Bardin Campus of the American Jewish University on the weekend of October 30 to November 2, 2025. Fall Camp Treasurer and Registrar, Mindy Belli, has completed a financial report to be presented at this meeting.

Camp was attended by 51 persons: 12 in single occupancy, 26 in double occupancy, 9 in triple occupancy, and 4 as commuters. The camp featured one non-local teacher, Catherine Rudin, plus four prominent Southern California dancers as teachers: Marc Rayman, Diane Baker, Marcella Lawson, and Valerie Daley.

In May 2025, I wrote to the Financial Committee that I would price Fall Camp \$100 per camper less than the anticipated cost to the Federation to encourage adequate attendance. For 60 attendees, that would amount to a net loss to the Federation of \$6,000 (a loss of \$100 per camper). We actually had 51 attendees and a net loss of \$3,759, which works out to a loss of \$74 per camper.

The Federation's loss would have been about six thousand without generous donations, including air travel miles from the Rayman's, financial donations from a number of dancers, and several volunteers who declined a stipend for their contributions.

Catherine Rudin worked out very well as our primary teacher, and was genuinely appreciated by the campers. Our four local teachers also worked out very well. Each was very different and taught very different dances, which was very right for the camp. One camper, who has attended many major IFD events outside of Southern CA, expressed to me the hope that each of those four teachers would be featured in more Federation events.

I am grateful to all who contributed, especially to Marc and Jan Rayman for their proof-reading and wise counsel, and especially to Mindy for her detailed accounting and patient communications with the registrants.

Terry Gucwa

Thoughts for a Future Fall Camp to the Folk Dance Federation of CA, South

For the Federation's Quarterly Council Meeting, December 14, 2025

Members of the Council:

I see from the contract submitted by AJU for a planned Fall Camp 2026 that prices would increase by 15%. For 2025, the Federation subsidized the cost of Fall Camp by 15% (for single occupancy) to 30% (for commuters). Donations further reduced the cost to the Federation.

I also see that the initial deposit for 2026 is due now. It is refundable up to 91 days before the event. For 2025, it was refundable until 61 days before the scheduled event.

Fall Camp 2025 attendance in 2025 was low: 51 attendees rather than a desired 60 attendees. It may be that selection of a teacher with limited recognition outside of the Mid-West and the Zoom community contributed to lower attendance than past years. On the other hand, some attendees came from outside SoCal specifically because Ms. Rudin was the main teacher. The overall effect is hard to know.

The next Fall Camp is again scheduled on a Halloween weekend. Halloween on Fall Camp weekend might have been beneficial, but delayed attendance for some dancers, and might have prevented some from attending at all. On the other hand, the costume party dance was a big hit, with a number of dancers calling for a Federation Costume Party every year.

Other contributing factors for low attendance might also have been two dance tours concurrent with Fall Camp 2025 – one led by Lee Otterholt and another led by Tineke and Maurits Van Geel – and a special event featuring Bulgarika on November 1 at the San Diego Folk Dance Center. Such conflicts might, or might not occur, during a Fall Camp 2026.

One previous and long-time camper who could not attend this year cited to me other reasons she thought attendance was low, and would probably remain low: Some dancers are taking care of infirm spouses, and more dancers are unable to drive at night or for long distances.

Federation finances seem to allow for another Fall Camp, if we can attract enough attendees. We can expect that the Federation would need to subsidize the event even more than in the past.

I, personally, want to see a Fall Camp 2026. Many Fall Camp attendees expressed strong desire for Fall Camp to continue. However, chairing Fall Camp is clearly something outside my comfort zone. Especially, I am not familiar with, or have personal connections with the luminaries that would ensure high attendance. Last Spring I found that very few prospective featured teachers offer the attributes we need: (1) a choreographer and/or collector of interesting dances, (2) clear and skillful at teaching dances, (3) fun at parties, (4) available that weekend and (5) not already booked in SoCal or at Stockton that year.

Selection of sought-after featured teacher(s), and the likelihood of sufficient attendance seem the questions most relevant to a decision on whether to plan a Fall Camp 2026. I wish I had clear answers to those questions.

Terry Gucwa

OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT

December 14, 2026

- ❖ **Irvine Multicultural Association Event November 5, 2025**
 - About 60-70 people attended
 - Presentation on Folkdancing in Southern California
 - Demo and Audience Participation Dances
 - Bulgarian demonstration by DEBA
 - Interfolk Band Members played – Kriss Larsen, Jim and Christina Garner
 - Marge Gajicki costumed dolls presentation
 - 4 Costumes presented (Albanian, Greek, Bulgarian)
- ❖ **Diane Baker OLLI Class**
 - Wrapped up another successful quarter – averaged 20-25 people in her class
 - Will continue in Winter Quarter
- ❖ **CVFD Armenian Workshop**
 - Paula to present more detail separately
- ❖ **Plans for another Nevenka Concert**
 - Big Anniversary Concert already set, likely cannot do another Outreach event this year.
 - Looking for ways/dates to collaborate in the future
- ❖ **Proposal to make this a Standing Committee**

YOU'RE INVITED
TO A

Luncheon

to celebrate

JAY AND JILL MIGHTOM'S

service to the Federation.

*Folk Dance Scene
Visiting Master Teacher Program
Making Folk Dance Fun
And Accessible to All!*

February 7
11:30 A.M.



P. F. Changs - 15301

Ventura Blvd., Sherman
Oaks, CA 91356

RSVP to Greg Solloway

sollowayg@gmail.com; 972-467-1406