

# Letters and Announcements

## SUBMITTING ARTICLES, PHOTOS & ADS

Articles, letters, poems, and photographs about contra and traditional square dance, English country dance, morris and sword dance, dance tunes, folksongs, and the dance and music community are welcome. Newly-composed dances and tunes also are welcome, as are new looks at historical dances and tunes. Please contact the Editor for guidelines or send submissions to [news@cdss.org](mailto:news@cdss.org) (maximum size for most articles: 1,200 words, 600 words for essays and event reviews). We may edit for length and clarity. Photos should be 300-600 dpi (print resolution).

**PERSONAL ADS** (75 words maximum) are free for CDSS members and \$5 for nonmembers.

## DISPLAY AD SIZES & RATES

full page, 7-1/8" wide x 9-1/4" high, \$440  
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## SENDING ADS

Ads must be black and white or grayscale and in PDF format. Send electronically to [news@cdss.org](mailto:news@cdss.org), with check or Visa/Mastercard info sent the same day.

## DEADLINES

Spring—February 1st (issue mailed early March)  
Summer—May 1st (issue mailed early June)  
Fall—August 1st (issue mailed early September)  
Winter—November 1st (issue mailed early December)

The **UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR** is online at [www.cdss.org/events](http://www.cdss.org/events). To include an event, send name of event, date, location, sponsoring group, website to [events@cdss.org](mailto:events@cdss.org).

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## SUPPORT

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## PLANNED GIVING

Does your will include the Country Dance and Song Society? If not, please consider ensuring that the programs, publications, and services that matter to you continue in the future with a bequest. It's practical and tax deductible. For information, go to [www.cdss.org/join-renew#planned-giving](http://www.cdss.org/join-renew#planned-giving).

## Pat MacPherson Retires from CDSS



Photo by Stewart Dean

It's been over 24 years since I started working at CDSS, first as Publications Coordinator and now as Director of Education. All along I have been thinking to myself: I have the best job ever! And I do—my time at CDSS has been full of laughter, ardent discussion, and passionate commitment. And yet, it is with a mixture of excitement and sorrow that I have decided to retire.

I have reached that magic age when the time seems right to re-evaluate, re-adjust, and think about the future. I have been a dancer and musician since the age of five, and I continue to feel most myself when among my dancing friends. That has not changed. Two years ago, I started to feel that it was time for me to consider moving on—to offer a place at CDSS for someone else—because I feel we can use different ideas and ways of doing things in order to thrive as an organization. What has changed also is my desire to explore new places (camping and hiking come to mind); new work adventures (I've already starting offering my musical and writing skills at Revels North, in Hanover, NH, working with my ex-colleagues Nils Fredland and Mary Wesley); and importantly, new ways to offer my skills to the wider world.

I have been waiting for the right moment for this transition and now it has come: CDSS is in a great place, with our new Executive Director, Katy German, at the helm. I will miss everyone here, and especially the opportunity to work with Katy, but at the end of December my time at CDSS will be over.

I will definitely be at camp—dancing, singing, playing music, and goofing around, like I do. I hope to see you on the dance floor sometime. Come and say hello!

Pat MacPherson, Director of Education

## 2018 Lifetime Contribution Award

Bill Alkire has positively impacted the world of American traditional dance for over 70 years. On Sunday, February 25th, there will be a celebration to honor Bill with the CDSS 2018 Lifetime Contribution Award. This open-to-the-public occasion will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Wayne County in Wooster, Ohio. The presentation will begin at

2:00 pm followed by a dance until 5:00 pm with invited callers leading contras, squares, mixers, and English country dancing for all. You can learn more about this event at [www.woosterdance.com/lifetime-award](http://www.woosterdance.com/lifetime-award) and RSVP by contacting Susan English at [senglish@umich.edu](mailto:senglish@umich.edu). To read about Bill's remarkable contributions to traditional dance throughout his life, visit [www.cdss.org/community/lifetime-contribution-award](http://www.cdss.org/community/lifetime-contribution-award).



## Song Representation in the CDSS News

Dear Friends—As a longtime member of CDSS, I have been delighted to see the “CDSS Sings” column. I also love traditional dancing, but “CDSS Sings” goes a small way toward providing some balance in a very dance-heavy publication. I grew up on singing calls, and I have called them, and I enjoy them. But please: ‘A Singing Square Dance’ in the Fall 2017 issue should be a dance article, and should not displace an article about traditional song in “CDSS Sings.” Yours in traditional song and dance, with at least a little more representation of song!

Steve Woodbury

*The CDSS Sings editor responds:*

Dear Steve—Thanks so much for taking the time not only to weigh in on the “Singing Square Dance,” but also for expressing your delight in the “CDSS Sings” column. As a CDSS board member who shares your love of traditional song, I introduced the column and continue to curate it. The ‘wedding’ of song and dance was my particular interest when I invited Bob Dalsemer to write his piece, although I can see it would be easy to construe it as more of a dance-focused article than a song-focused one.

Please do look at our wonderful “Song of the Month” feature on the CDSS website. We introduced it in 2016 in celebration of the CDSS Year of Song, and are still going strong. Judy Cook, ballad singer from Oberlin, Ohio, is the current curator. Past columns are archived on the site ([cdss.org/community/song-of-the-month](http://cdss.org/community/song-of-the-month))—great for building song repertoire and being introduced to a wide range of sources.

Lorraine Lee Hammond

## Making Waves: Why a Women’s Weekend?

In December 2016, Dela Taylor Murphy and I were deep in a conversation about our shared experience of being women in the contra dance community. We both found that post-2016-election conversations with our friends and colleagues seemed to be profoundly sincere, troubled, and important. Around us, we were watching the Women’s March materialize. It was clear that we were not alone in feeling shaken and vulnerable, and we were not alone in feeling stronger when we spent time with other women.

As we spoke of the importance of our contra dance communities to us at that time, Dela asked: “What would a women’s contra dance weekend look like?” We began to list the topics we wanted to discuss: the female experience on the dance floor and in the wider contra dance community, feminist labor and leadership, decolonizing our traditions, how to best care for ourselves and each other in community spaces, queer expression in cultural acts like dance.... The list went on, and grew to encompass other things we wanted to share—space to make art, time to really relax— and to cultivate in our community.

This was the birth of Form the Ocean. Designed for women (specifically, those who identify as female, non-binary, genderfluid, genderqueer, trans, and/or femme), we imagine this weekend to be about more than dance. Held at Chimney Corners in Becket, Massachusetts, in May 2018, the weekend will feature an all-female cast of stars: Gaye Fifer calling, Anadama (Emily Troll, Bethany Waickman, and Amelia Mason) playing, and Carol Boyer as lead sound technician. In addition to our contra dance sets, we will offer dance workshops on initiating figures and flourishes (from both left and right positions), waltzing, intentional self-care, and communication.

This weekend is about forming the ocean of women who will gather for an adventure and leave to spread the ideas, care, and enthusiasm we hope they find together. We know it is necessary for community health to create a space where women can come together—to dance, to create, to have powerful and challenging conversations. What is possible when women gather? What will it mean for the folk community and beyond? We’d like to find out.

Avia Moore

*Registration opened in September, and the weekend was 50% full by the end of October. Find out more at [formtheocean.com](http://formtheocean.com).*