

EAST EUROPEAN FOLKLIFE CENTER KEFTIMES

FALL 2007 VOL. 12, NO. 2

Kids at Camp

By Julie Lancaster

Kids are one of the most vibrant aspects of Balkan camp today: children who attend camp with their parents, teenagers and young adults who grew up attending camp and now are adding their own energy to the scene and—especially lately— young newcomers who have discovered Balkan camp on their own.



Kids' class at Iroquois Springs this year with teacher, Marlis Kraft-Zemel. Photo by Margaret Loomis.

When Nesa Levy, daughter of camp founder Mark Levy and Carol Silverman, attended her first camp (East Coast) in 1986, she was only a few months old and the only child there.



Nesa is now a senior at Vassar studying drama.

Now 21 and a senior at Vassar studying drama, she says, "Balkan camp is definitely a big part of who I am. Just being exposed to another culture—not very many people have that. It has broadened my world perspective.

"I like the community feeling of camp," she adds. "The extended family aspect. A lot of people have watched me growing up, and I've made friends I've known for so many years. Even if I don't see them every year, we pick up in the same place."

By the time of her earliest camp memories, she remembers there being "lots of kids, but not as many as they are now." There was no children's program. Her parents would hire a babysitter or get her grandparents to come and help watch her.

Nesa has attended one or the other camp every year since that first one, except once when she was 15 or 16 and wanted a break. "There was never any pressure," she says. "I remember my parents asking, are you sure you still want to go?"

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2008 WORKSHOPS

WEST COAST

Mendocino Woodlands
Mendocino, California
June 28-July 5

EAST COAST

Iroquois Springs
Rock Hill, New York
August 9-18

For a brochure with registration forms write to:

EEFC
P.O. Box 12488
Berkeley, CA 94712

Or visit:

www.eefc.org

EEFC MISSION STATEMENT

The East European Folklife Center (EEFC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate the general public about the folk music, folk dance and folklore of the Balkans through promoting and sponsoring activities which honor and celebrate the richness of these cultures; and to foster understanding and respect of all peoples through shared experiences of Balkan cultures.

From the Editor

Here in the Northern Hemisphere, the dark days of fall are closing in. If you can find a few minutes, go brew yourself a cup of something hot to drink, settle in next to your monitor in the gloaming, and gaze at the colorful, high-resolution photo spreads in this issue. Although I still miss the printed version of *Kef Times*, these vivid photos from last summer's camps, snapped by various photographers and selected and arranged by Dan Auvil, offer considerable compensation. If you half-close your eyes you can just about hear the music.

This issue's lead story focuses on children, teenagers and young adults—kids who grew up at camp, young people who discovered camp on their own, being a parent with kids at camp, what kids bring to Balkan camp and what it means to them. It's a continuation of our series on camp history, but from some different perspectives. The story is rather long to read on screen, so we invite you to print it out (choose the low-resolution, single-page, printer-friendly layout) and take the pages to your favorite comfy chair or steaming bathtub.

You'll also find glimpses into the camp experience from this year's scholarship recipients, news from the EEFC Board, news of recordings and publications from folks in our community, and plenty of inspiration to become a member or to renew your EEFC membership for this year if you haven't already done so (see page 22).

Julie Lancaster



Kids catch up with each other at Iroquois Springs. Photo by Margaret Loomis (2007).

Her favorite part of camp?

"Two different things," she says. "I love whenever the brass band plays and I'm standing on a bench at the side dancing and singing along. And when Brenna [MacCrimmon] does her relaxing set in the kafana, fire going, everyone is just sort of sitting, soaking it in, with their eyes closed."

YOUTHFUL ENERGY

In contrast to other folk dance camps, where greying populations have led to decreased enrollment, both West and East Coast Balkan camps have enjoyed robust enrollment in recent years, including a healthy proportion of children and young adults.

[*continued on page 4*](#)



At Mendocino different generations hang out at mealtimes. . Photos by Bill Lanphier (2001)



from left to right: General Manager Rachel MacFarlane and Board Members Emily Cohen, Gitry Heydebrand, Michael Sensor, Dan Auvil, Denys Carrillo, Linnea Mandell and Matthew Fass shown on the porch of Michael Sensor's home in Delaware during our fall '07 board meeting.

N O V E M B E R 2 0 0 7

The EEFC Board meeting in October 2007 was exhilarating and exhausting, as always. We are proud to announce that the Nest Egg campaign achieved its financial goal, and a matching grant program was also highly successful. We came close to reaching our membership goal for fiscal year 2006-07 and are continuing to work on implementing a strong membership drive for next fiscal year. We are developing a sustaining membership category so that members can set up an automatic monthly withdrawal, and are in the final stages of renegotiating our credit card system to make signing up easier. Two members of the community have made a commitment to our endowment program so far and we hope that others will join in this simple method of making a meaningful contribution to the EEFC in the future.

The 2007 EEFC workshops were judged to be an unqualified success this year, both at Mendocino and at Iroquois Springs. Both workshops were at maximum capacity and the majority of people who attended had a very positive experience this year. As always, we have reviewed each and every comment from the camp evaluations and are following up on any issues that need to be addressed.

We are continuing to upgrade and improve the EEFC website, with a focus on

expanding access and available resources. We will soon be announcing the appointment of a part-time marketing director, who will be responsible for EEFC products and also for increasing EEFC's visibility. We are continuing to explore grant possibilities for outreach projects as well as for operating support. We are setting up a volunteer coordination system that will list specific tasks and projects so that the energy and skill of the EEFC community can be utilized more effectively. And we will have a 2008 budget in a few weeks!

Many thanks from the EEFC Board to everyone who helped make this a successful year, not just at the EEFC workshops but in all the myriad ways that people in the Eastern European folk music and dance community keep the vision going.

Gitry Heydebrand - President; Long-Term Planning Committee chair

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Emily Cohen - Membership Committee chair; Scholarship Committee chair

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KEF TIMES

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"Kef" is a word used in various forms throughout the Balkans to convey a spirit of pleasure and enjoyment, such as one experiences when partaking of good food, music, dancing and friendship.

For information about the East European Folklife Center, the Balkan Music & Dance Workshops, or to be included on our mailing list, contact us at the address above, or phone: 510/547-1118, e-mail: office@eeefc.org website: www.eeefc.org

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Miriam (right) with her mom, Marlis Kraft-Zemel. Photo by Margaret Loomis (2007).

MIRIAM ZEMEL 16, East Coast

I was only 6 months when I went to my first camp . . . I still have a very small camp T-shirt and a nametag to show for it. Since then I haven't missed one camp.

My parents met during one of the camps . . . Fast-forward five or so years, they were married and I was born straight into the Balkan community.

My earliest memory of camp was at age three carrying my sheepskin to the front of the main stage where my father was playing, and falling asleep in front of the amplifiers.

For the first 13 years of my life the best things about camp were the granted independence from my parents and the core group of friends that returned every year. Though both of those reasons still stand true, what I look forward to most about camp now is the vibrant and pulsating nightly concerts that last for easily seven hours. I've grown up with this music and now I feel like I can finally appreciate it.

Having grown up in the crazy but secure environment of Balkan camp, I love to see other children doing the same now. My friends and I started at kids' class and are now singing sets and starting dance lines. I now see how we kids are the new generation and future of Balkan camp.

Many factors are at play. Some are obvious: camp is fun for children and their parents. The outdoor setting lends itself to enjoyment, there are lots of potential friends and things to do. Parents tend to be less stressed at camp than at home, especially when they know their kids are safe and well occupied. And when people young and old are busy pursuing their passions, that leads to even more good feelings.

Other aspects are less obvious. As with Nesa, several kids we spoke to reported that, once they were old enough, their parents let them decide to go to camp or not. Perhaps an extension of a "live and let live" ethic common in Balkan campers, this is a key factor in kids not being turned off from their parents' interests—although certainly there are kids who opt not to participate as they get older.

Balkan camp's emphasis on music as well as dance casts a wider net of interest than a dance-only camp, and Balkan music converges, happily, with the current popularity of "world" music. Young musicians and dancers from outside the community are discovering Balkan music and the camps, and bringing their bandmates to drink at the well.

Finally, and not insignificantly, the EEFC board has focused considerable attention on young people at camp and made the deliberate choice to welcome them.

GROWING UP AT CAMP

At the first Balkan camps at Sweet's Mill and Camp Mattole in mid-1970s California, most of the organizers were in their 20s and didn't have kids. They didn't particularly think about kids. You might say they *were* kids.

As campers started having families, they started bringing their children, but it was informal. There was no children's program or infrastructure to make things easier for parents.

"It was wonderful, but it was also a challenge," says Leanne Mennin, who, with her then husband Stewart, brought their son Ely to Sweet's



Mendocino kids in Petur Iliev's class perform at the student concert. Photo by Joe Mandell (2001).

Mill when he was less than a year old, and later to the Mendocino camps throughout his childhood.

“We had to bring babysitters,” Leanne says. “We knew we’d be wanting to take classes and we’d need some help with the kids. Also, staying up late at night with the parties felt important, so we brought teenagers who would go to sleep when the kids did and keep an eye on them.”

Ely and three or four other little boys would amuse themselves in a stream for hours, then play in the dusty dining hall yard at Mendocino Camp 2, she says. They’d get filthy. Their greatest thrill was to slide down a 30-foot-long, burned-out hollow log lying on a hillside, worn smooth from kids sliding down it. Leanne and the other mothers spent hours doing laundry by hand and hanging it up to “dry” (an elusive goal in Mendocino’s damp environment).

“They would turn into little feral kids for a week and show up at mealtime with the babysitter, and then they’d go off again,” Leanne says. “They were free of parents hovering over them and felt really independent. They were in a community where there were adults around that cared about them, where they were safe and didn’t have to worry about crossing streets.

“For Ely it was the highlight of every year,” she adds. “As soon as we’d get home, he would start talking about Mendocino, what they had done and what they could do next year.”

LAYING INFRASTRUCTURE

As more people brought children to camp, it became clear that some aspects of a young-adult camp—skinny-dipping, substance imbibing and other “adult” activities—were at risk if the camps were to become officially “family friendly.”

Not everyone welcomed the idea. There were long and heated discussions at camp and at board meetings.

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Photo by Kathy Fors

EVAN STUART 18, West Coast

My first camp was in June 2004 at Mendocino. I came to Balkan camp because my mom promised me a free ticket to Balkan camp six months earlier on my birthday. I didn’t take the offer seriously at first but come June I took her up on it, and I have come to every Mendocino camp since that first year.

The music at camp for me is definitely the highlight, although the friendships there have become some of my best.

I play Balkan music in several different bands in the Bay Area throughout the rest of the year (Brass Menažeri, California Kapela, The Brash Punks, and guest appearances with Zabava, Top Dog Run, Edessa, and Cope Family Band). I play tuba, have started playing electric and upright bass, and I also play Bulgarian and Macedonian tambura, kaval, and percussion when called upon. I rehearse at least once a week and I perform almost every weekend (not strictly Balkan/folkdance related events).

The amount of “kids” at camp is growing and the youth are vital!!



Marlis conducts her class at Iroquois Springs for their student concert. Photo by Margaret Loomis (2007).



Lacey with her mom, Kim Cope. Photo by Bill Lanphier.

LACEY COPE 18, mostly West Coast

My first camp was in 1989, I was six weeks old and according to my mom had the worst case of colic. Since then I haven't missed a year. This past summer was my 19th camp experience.

Camp has always been such an integral part of my life I cannot imagine not going. The village environment, the interwoven community, the boundless and joyful music and dance, the late-night parties, the delicious food, the life-time bonds of friendship . . . any aspect without the rest would not have the same impact. It's the entire experience that makes it so incredible.

Growing up at Balkan camp has made me a more rounded person. It differentiates me from my friends (especially while in high school) because I am open to all sorts of music and dance from cultures around the world. Many of my peers are only exposed to what they hear on popular radio stations and at school dances. I also credit growing up in such a community with my love of learning and knowledge.

When I was younger, going to camp was just for fun and hanging out with my friends in the woods for a week with little parental restraint. Now, it has grown into a place where I can also continue to grow as a musician and dancer, thriving on others' expertise and experience.

In 1991 the EEFC introduced a children's program at Mendocino with teacher Jeff Stonehill. The next year they added a children's program at Buffalo Gap, with teacher Marlis Kraft-Zemel, who runs the kid's program at East Coast camp today.

But even as late as 1994, the board was tackling what they called a "long-term consideration: whether to encourage the presence of children at camps." Finally, after polling campers in depth, the board announced its decision: a resounding "yes." Today the camp brochure reads, "We welcome families," followed by a statement about the presence of "alcoholic beverages" and "occasional skinny-dipping."



Kids hard at work in Marlis' class. You may see the fruits of their labor in the photo that begins this article. Photo by Margaret Loomis (2007).

The EEFC has continued to add administrative support for kids at camp, instituting a required meeting for parents at the beginning of each camp to establish accountability. The children's program provides for about two and a half hours per day of activities that, depending on the teacher, may include crafts, dancing, soccer, hikes and more. The children's program does not constitute full-time childcare. Some parents still bring a babysitter to camp; some older children attend classes in the regular program.

These days, the exuberant participation of young children is particularly noticeable at the auctions and student concerts. But kids have always contributed their special kind of fun. One time back at Camp 2, Leanne says, they decided to charge the adults admission to the fire circle.



And the dance goes on. Photo by Margaret Loomis (2007).

COMING INTO THEIR OWN

What about young adults who have been attracted from outside the community?

“I think the turning point was in 1997, when Esma came to camp,” says EEFC general manager Rachel MacFarlane. “In 1996 I remember looking around and noticing that a lot of us were in our 40s. In 1997, because of Esma, there was an influx of 20- and 30-somethings. Some of them heard about Balkan camp on the Web.” This batch of younger folks included Peter Jaques, Dan Cantrell, Matthew Fass, Ari Langer, Timothy Quigley, Jodi Hewat, Adam Good and Matt Moran.

“Some of them have moved further with the music and developed their own bands,” Rachel says. “They come in and say, hey, that looks cool, and get in the dance line. Dancing enhances their understanding of the music, which can make such a difference in a person’s playing.”

At the same time, campers’ children now in their twenties have been coming into their own artistically. Eva Salina Primack, who grew up going to camp with her parents, is now in her early 20s and graduated last year with an ethnomusicology degree from UCLA. She has taught beginning Balkan singing at Mendocino for the past two years and has a busy performing and recording schedule. So does Jesse Kotansky, who attended most of the Balkan camps at which his dad Steve Kotansky taught and is now a multi-instrumentalist and composer living in Brooklyn.

“This year there was a lot of crossover and interaction among the young population and the older campers and staff,” says Rachel. “The gudulka is right in there with an electric guitar. It’s exceptional. It’s how the dance and the music stay vital.”



Young musicians Peter Jaques, Ryan Francesconi and Dan Cantrell.



Photo by Margaret Loomis (2007).

JEREMY BLOOM 17, East Coast

My first Balkan camp was in summer 2006. I attended this year and plan to continue in the future.

I came to camp because of an increasing desire to learn more about Balkan musical styles. Before arriving, I had learned everything I knew about Balkan music by listening to recordings. I was thirsty for knowledge from real live musicians that I could talk to.

What I like best about camp is the likeminded kindred spirits, especially those of my own age. Although my friends from school and home embrace what I do, they can’t imagine that there are possibly more people in the world “like me.” When they ask me about Balkan camp, I tell them to imagine 200 people just like me, only usually EVEN MORE intensely passionate toward Balkan music.

I play in a band, “Grupa Pubeski,” along with fellow Balkan camp attendees Zach and Elliott Kurtz. We’ve been on internationally broadcast Turkish TV. I am always practicing new instruments, be it violin, accordion, saz, kaval, ud, or whatever else I’m in the mood to play. I try my best to stay connected with the Balkan community in NYC by attending events. ALSO, this summer, before Balkan camp, I lived in Turkey for five weeks, where my musical knowledge became an essential tool of communication. I gained the acceptance of a small, English-less, peach-picking village entirely by playing them “Mastika” on my violin.

NEW AND

Notable

New recordings and books by EEFC associates, including workshop campers, staff and teachers, and other EEFC supporters, whose names are noted in bold type in each entry.



BRAZEN – BRASS MENAŽERI BALKAN BRASS BAND

The debut album from the San Francisco Bay Area's premier Balkan Rom-style brass band. Brass Menažeri performs rousing, soulful tunes from the living tradition of the great Rom brass bands of Serbia, Macedonia and Greece. Brazen is a shining example of traditional repertoire combined with new sensibilities and innovative arrangements from the hands and lips of American devotees. The band includes: **Peter Jaques**, **Briget Boyle**, **Jeff Garaventa**, **Mary Hofer Farris**, Larry Leight, **Rachel MacFarlane**, **Eric Oberthaler**, **Michele Simon** and **Randy Trigg**.

To order, go to: <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/brassmenazeri>



EXIT VISA – PANGÉO

Pangéo's new release is a tour-de-force of party tunes from Northern Greece and, yes, Albania (don't tell the Greeks!). With an interesting choice of tunes, from Florina brass band-style to Vlach, Ipirot, and Macedonian zourna tunes, you will want to go buy a cherry red Mustang, put the top down and blast the music all the way up the coast! This recording is due to be out in the spring, but for advance listening, go to www.kyklosmusic.com. Featuring **Christos Govetas** on vocals, clarinet, saxophone and zourna, **Ruth Hunter** on accordion and voice, Kane Mathis and Dave Bartley on guitars, Will Dowd on percussion.

To order, go to <http://www.kyklosmusic.com/PANGEO/Pangeomain.html>.



BULGARIA & SONS! – COMP. YVES MOREAU

Just re-released in CD format, three out-of-print cassettes produced between 1988 and 1992, Bulgaria and Sons! is a collection of unusual Bulgarian folk music compiled and narrated by **Yves Moreau**. The collection now includes nine new bonus tracks and a 24-page booklet.

For more details and sample clips, go to: <http://www.bourque-moreau.com/bg&sons.html>



VOICE OF THE TARAGOT – GEORGHE TRAMBITAS

A Romanian Transylvanian taragot player, Gheorghe Trambitas is one of the foremost exponents of the instrument. Here he has collaborated with the Ovidiu Bartes Folk Orchestra. This recording was produced in part by **Alexander Fedoriouk** with liner notes by **Walter Mahovich**.

For more information, visit: <http://www.folksoundsrecords.net>; or contact Alexander Fedoriouk, Folk Sounds Records, P.O. Box 609067, Cleveland, OH 44109-0067.



2 NEW CDs FROM TATIANA SARBINSKA

Renowned soloist of Bulgaria's Pirin Ensemble, **Tatiana Sarbinska** has been named a National Treasure and bestowed the honor of Voice of Bulgaria by the government of Bulgaria. She works extensively with a number of Balkan choruses in Boston and the Washington, DC, area.

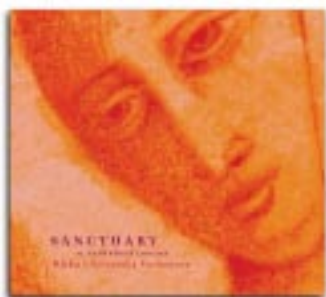
To order, go to: <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/tatianasarbinka1> (Makedonsko Devojche)
<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/tatianasarbinka2> (Katerino Mome)



MAKEDONSKO DEVOJCHE

KATERINO MOME

TWO NEW CDs FROM KITKA WOMEN'S VOCAL ENSEMBLE



SANCTUARY: A CATHEDRAL CONCERT - KITKA

Kitka's new CD features meditative and ecstatic songs from Eastern European spiritual traditions woven together with folk songs whose haunting melodies and rich harmonies soar in resonant space. Several tracks showcase solos by **Tzvetanka Varimezova**, backed up by the lush choral textures of Kitka, currently consisting of Zlatka Baneva, Leslie Bonnett, **Briget Boyle**, **Shira Cion**, Catherine Rose Crowther, **Juliana Graffagna**, Phoebe Jevtovic, Janet Kutulas, and Natalia Ukrainska. Sanctuary is inspired by the group's popular cathedral concerts, in which listeners are transported by a continuous unfolding of vocal music, expressing emotions from contemplative to rousing.



THE RUSALKA CYCLE: SONGS BETWEEN THE WORLDS – KITKA

In Slavic folklore, Rusalki are the restless spirits of women who have died unjust, untimely or unnatural deaths. They inhabit the waters, forests and fields and lure people with their mesmerizing songs and wild laughter. This CD presents music from the 2005 vocal-theatre project co-created by Kitka, composer and music director Mariana Sadovska, and stage director Ellen Sebastian Chang. Performed by Kitka, The Rusalka Cycle intertwines traditional Eastern European folk song with original music by Mariana Sadovska and delivers Kitka singing as you've never heard them sing before. Accompaniment by cellists Moses Sedler and Elaine Kreston, and percussionist Kevin Mummey.

To order, visit: <http://www.kitka.org>



7TH ANNUAL EAST COAST CAMP 2007 PHOTO DVD

It was another wonderful camp – our own Balkan Brigadoon – with an incredible week of music, classes, parties, weather, food and friends. If you never got around to taking out your camera (or didn't even bother to bring one because you knew someone else would probably have hers), here's your chance! These photos are a lot of fun and also make a great gift. This DVD contains 881 photos, including:

- evening parties and kafanas
- music and dance classes in action
- group sing
- auction on Tuesday night
- all classes performing at Friday's student concert
- Friday afternoon soccer game
- Friday's lakeside picnic
- scenic views of Iroquois Springs
- candid and semi-candid shots throughout the week
- many spontaneous moments

This photo DVD was produced as a fundraiser; all proceeds go to EEFC. It is available for \$25 plus \$2 shipping/handling in the U.S., from: **Margaret Loomis**, 10206 Day Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Phone: 301/565-0539; e-mail: mloom@mac.com.



MAY IT FILL YOUR BOWL: A COOKBOOK FROM PLANINA

Because the music Colorado's mixed chorus Planina - Songs of Eastern Europe performs is inextricably linked with celebrations, food, dancing and community, Planina has created a cookbook containing more than 75 recipes, mostly Eastern European favorites, from Planina members, teachers and friends. With apologies to Timothy Rice and his book, *May It Fill Your Soul: Experiencing Bulgarian Music*, and in the same spirit of wanting to share something wonderful, Planina offers this lovingly compiled, taste-tested and graphics-rich cookbook. Edited by **Jessica Bondy**, designed by **Julie Lancaster**, with illustrations for working with filo by **Josie Teodosieva**.

184 pages, soft cover, coil bound. For more details and to order, go to <http://www.planina.org/cookbook.html>



- ▲ The evening's parties begin in the old dance hall. Built by the WPA and CCC in the 1930s, the camp (www.mendocinowoodlands.org) is a National Historic Landmark and the facility, though rustic, is very well maintained.
- ▼ At the other end of the hall, hot and lively bands play for dancing. Their music is the only "smoking" allowed in the hall.



- ▼ The cabins, nestled among redwoods and ferns, are fully enclosed and equipped with a fireplace, closet and balcony.

- ▼ Merita Halili and Raif Hyseni enthral the audience with their engaging performance.





▲ George Chittenden expounds to his clarinet students.



▲ John Parrish mulls over an auction item.
Photo by Katia McClain.



▲ Christos Govetas teaches an old table song at an old table.

▼ David Porter on tambura "woodsheds" in the woods.



▲ Mady Taylor reflects on how camp has evolved.
Photo by Katia McClain.



▲ Vassil Bebelev is a gajdar "outstanding in his field." What better place to learn traditional village music?



▲ Mendocino camp site manager Lanita Hyatt takes a moment to pose between duties.



▲ Julie Graffagna is pleasantly amused.



▲ Kalin Kirilov, Vassil Bebelev, Nikolay Doctorov and Tzvetanka Varimezova demonstrate the fine art of "hanging." Photo by Katia McClain.



▲ John Morovich emphatically makes a point at the kafana while Bill Cope warms up.
▼ Kafana party coordinator Steve Ramsey runs a tight ship.



▲ Rumen "Sali" Shopov shows that his musical interests includes woodwinds. Photo by Katia McClain.



▲ It's not surprising that Eleni Govetas looks right at home at Mendocino camp, she's been attending all her life.



▲ Everybody loves a parade. This one celebrates the wedding anniversary of Kent Bailey and Jessica Fiske.

▼ Rea Hyseni works on her streamer technique.
Photo by Katia McClain.



▲ Bobby Govetas directs with streamers.



▲ This festive parade follows the journals on the last day.

▼ It culminates at the amphitheater to start the student concert.





▲ The large dance hall gives everyone room to boogie to a Balkan beat. This hall will be completely renovated within the next two years.

▼ The Bulgarian band "Kabile" was only one of the many dance hall bands compelling campers to leave their chairs to shake a leg.



▲ And there are many bands in the after-hours Kafana. Here's the Triangle Front Liberation Front, a pick-up band specializing in Russian music.

▼ Carol Silverman's ad hoc Rom band rocked the casbah.



▲ Cabins are well appointed with electricity, bathroom and showers. Most campers bring items to personalize their digs. And some campers bring their own digs. Lynette Garlan and Jim Rumbaugh's deluxe vardo is shown in inset.





▲ Michael Ginsburg gives some personal attention to J.R. Hankins.

▼ Sonia Dion and Cristian Florescu demonstrate a Romanian couple dance.



▲ Matt Moran's doumbek class is pretty crowded...

◀ ...and pretty entertaining.



▲ Oliver Goers, who found out about the camp from our website (eeffc.org), travelled from Germany just to study tapan.



▲ Nikolay Kolev gives a sensitive rendition for his gudulka class.

▼ Kyriakos Moisidis performs a Pontic pirouette as Joe Graziosi and Bell Birchfield hold the line.



▲ Yianni Roussos' class plays a pastorelle in a pastoral setting.

▼ Donka Koleva teaches an intricate turn.



▼ Kalin Kirilov conducts an excellent class.





▲ Chris Rietz and Peter Gronwold proudly display their pig-themed t-shirts.



▲ Batja Bell, Morgan Clark and Lauren Brody.



▲ Hanging down by the lake at the last day's lamb roast.



▲ Martha and Dick Forsyth share a rare inactive moment.



▲ Judy Kropf and her daughter Sophie.



▼ Newlyweds Patricia Soper and Michael Sensor.

▲ It was great to see Laura Pannaman cast aside her temporary cane and get her groove back. We're sure Demetri Tashie agrees.



▲ Double-decker dancing. *lower deck:* Matthew Fass, Billy Schultz *upper deck:* Stacey Anne Sternberg and Felicia Goldberg

▼ Chris Bajmakovich and John Morovich serenade campers at the Membership Appreciation Party.



▲ *inset:* Laine Harris & Genevieve Leloup replenish essential fluids to dancers at the kafana bar.

▲ Demetri Tashie, Beth Cohen and Yianni Roussos provide a little background music to hard-working grillmeisters Alan Zemel and EEFC General Manager Rachel MacFarlane.





▲ The meeting of two camps: The kids from soccer camp get a surprise education in zourna playing and table dancing. Even though Balkan camp shares the facility for part of the week, the camp is large enough that there's not much overlap.



▲ A Brazilian parade leading up to the auction. Rachel MacFarlane hones her chops as a drum stand.



▲ Gregory Frumin, Lynette Garland and Margaret Loomis get festive.

▼ Dzhenko Andreev provides his take on Bulgarian bacchanalia.



▲ Helpful signs by Batja Bell keep campers on track and globally positioned.



▲ The midweek auction is a very important camp fun(d) raiser. Participants deserve a hearty thank you!

▼ Mairzy Doats and dozy doats and little kids eat lambsies.



▲ The Trans-Carp vs. Brass Band soccer game has become a lively, hard-fought affair. It's hard to believe that Kalman Magyar the loving father (inset) is the same person as the ruthless soccer player shown above. The Brass Band won this year's grudge match.

The photos on pages 14-17 are copyright © 2007 by Margaret Loomis.

They are available on a DVD produced as a fundraiser for the EEFC. To order see [page 9](#).

LETTERS FROM THE

2007
SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

These five people received full scholarships to the 2007 EEFC Workshops.

Information on 2008 scholarships will be available soon at eeec.org

The deadline for applications is February 29, 2008.



WEST COAST KEF SCHOLAR

MARY GOLDMAN

As I approached the Mendocino Balkan camp along the twisted road, I was exhausted. It was just past midnight on Sunday when I pulled into the parking area for the Meadow, barely awake. Needless to say, I was thoroughly shocked when I found the bathroom full of people. I thought, "Don't these people know it's 12:30 in the morning?!" It was then I got my first taste of the main motto of Balkan camp campers: try to squeeze as much as possible into every moment, otherwise known as "concentrated living."

Each night of camp is filled with a myriad of bands and dancers, with everything happening back-to-back, or worse, all at once. It is futile to decide where to be and when/if you should finally go to bed. However, it would be misleading to say that nights were only parties, for, in an effort to live in a concentrated manner, some of the best lessons also happen in the twilight hours. There are new dances, new songs and new techniques being introduced every night, unfortunately, at the hour in which you are able to absorb the least. It is all you can do to try and learn.

The days, as one might guess, are no different. They are filled with multiple classes happening simultaneously, all on interesting topics that you would be foolish to pass up. If you add in the breathtaking scenery, good hiking and swimming holes, you begin to wish that you could multiply yourself. Camp is also a good time to indulge dreams about learning a particular dance or an instrument. The back woods and isolated paths are perfect places for shy beginners to practice, and teachers are happy to let you sit in on classes for pointers, provided you can find the time.

This camp of concentrated living is where the best parties and the best teaching happen all day and all night. While a week may sound long, previous campers know that it is not enough. And so one must return next year for some more concentrated living.

Mary Goldman lives in Santa Cruz and works part-time as a technician doing biological conservation research and part-time as a state park aide. She dances at Cabrillo College, especially when there is live music.

JORGE KACHMARIK



I first heard of Balkan camp last year when I discovered a Balkan music and dance night in Portland, Ore., at It's a Beautiful Pizza. This event still goes on every Tuesday night.

I had been getting interested in odd meters and timing . . . first I guess I should tell you that I play the violin and the piccolo as well as the guitar and some percussion, so I had been studying, trying to figure out 7/8 rhythms and such. Going to this Balkan night helped me out a lot. Kafana Klub, which is the resident band, helped me out a bit and listening to them each week helped my knowledge of the music grow. They mentioned Balkan camp to me.

I am in a traveling band and we play klezmer and Gypsy jazz and some Balkan music, so we were touring through Mexico and Guatemala when I found out about the Kef Scholarship, and since my livelihood comes from my music you can guess how much extra money I have to spend . . . so I decided to give the scholarship a chance. I ended up getting it but none of my band mates did, so our accordion player, who was going on a work trade [Ed. note: partial tuition-waiver work exchange] and I went to camp.

I had no idea what to expect, honestly. I was excited for weeks leading up to the event, though. As I am a self-taught musician the prospect of a bit of formal training was enthralling. When we got there I was on cloud nine after a jam with an accordion player, playing a few klezmer tunes we both knew. The week only got better. Having the music drilled into me virtually 24 hours a day (I slept as little as possible), I really began to get a feel for the music, to feel it in my soul, which I believe is quite necessary to play any kind of music, you really must feel it.

Beth Cohen was my violin teacher and she blew me away with her abilities. She is the kind of person who makes you want to study the fiddle intensely so you can be even a smidgeon as good as she is. The ensemble classes were amazing as well. I was in Albanian ensemble with Raif. I really enjoyed the music—in fact, one of the songs we learned in that ensemble I got to play with the Kafana Klub at a Tuesday night Balkan jam in Portland after camp.

One other thing that I took away after getting a feel for the music was the severe differences in the music from region to region, let alone country to country. Before, we would say we play “Eastern European” music. Our band had learned a handful of tunes from Romania, Hungary, Russia and few other countries, but I had very little idea of what that meant. After getting to talk to the Bulgarians and see and hear their music; the Albanians, the music is so smooth to my ear; the Greek and Turkish and then the Trans-Carpathian, it's so rich and diversified; I feel like I got a huge education during my week at camp.

I have been learning many new songs as of late and I have been able to really feel the music so much better. I made several friends through the camp and my overall musical knowledge has been enriched by this amazing experience—thank you so much for the chance to be a part of the community. I feel truly blessed to have experienced it all.

Jorge is a traveling musician and filed this story from the road.

EAST COAST KEF SCHOLAR

ALLA GENERALOW

Sitting one night on a lawn chair, wrapped in a borrowed blanket outside my newly found, sure-to-be lifelong friends' cabin, I was watching people play pieces I didn't know. I had contentedly settled into just listening and learning by ear that night while a group of talented instrumentalists performed. One of them got up, handed me a tambourine and simply said: "play." No one asked me for my résumé, a list of previous experience or professional references. There would be no criticism, applause or a review in the next morning's paper, just a chance to make music with lovely people under the stars.



"Play." What an empowering word! Balkan camp reminded me of the tremendous joy and excitement of performance. Where else but at Balkan camp can you walk from house to house and hear streaming out of every window, or from every porch, haunting melodies and exciting rhythms? The experience of making music, and more importantly, delighting in it, somehow gave the energy needed to dance in the kafana until the wee hours of the morning and then miraculously get up again several short hours later to . . . go dancing.

Interestingly enough, I fell in love at camp . . . with the prim! I had decided that Balkan camp was where I was going to learn how to play a stringed instrument, even if it killed me. Many thanks go out to John Morovich for his extra efforts to form and teach a beginner class in tamburica, and to Jerry Starcevic who was kind enough to volunteer his time and talents to our class. Jay House, Becca Starcevic and Matt Shear also deserve special thanks for their encouragement.

I am a third-year doctoral student in choral conducting at the University of Arizona, finishing coursework and starting work on my dissertation this semester. Rejuvenated from this amazingly unique experience, I am already sharing my observations with my students. I found my way to the EEFC and Balkan camp, as I'm sure many ethnomusicology students will in the future, through Mirjana Lausevic's *Balkan Fascination*. I had no idea that reading it would change my life. I am deeply grateful to the author, and to all who contribute to scholarship opportunities for new campers; without these people I would never have made it to Iroquois Springs. It will be a long year out here in the Arizona desert without all of my fellow campers, but I look forward to seeing you again and until then, only one word counts: "play."

Alla is living in Tucson, Ariz. Her doctoral dissertation is about Serbian sacred choral music of the early twentieth century.

EAST COAST KEF SCHOLAR

AURORA NEALAND

Aurora was not available for comment. She lives in Brooklyn, NY.

KATHY MITCHELL SCHOLAR

JACKI MALIN

Note: 2007 is the last year the Kathy Mitchell Scholarship will be awarded.

Remaining funds have been donated to the Kef/Dick Crum Scholarship fund.

A heartfelt thanks to all the donors.



The last time I went to camp I was in eighth grade and a counselor at a Bible camp with cabin names like “Chippewa.” We sang songs with lots of hand movements around the campfire at night, and

my young campers took all of my underwear and hung it from the rafters inside the cabin and out.

That was years ago, and fortunately, Mendocino Balkan camp was nothing like that! I didn’t quite know what to expect, but I did not expect the dancing, dancing, dancing that went on day and night. It always looks so easy when you watch a line of folk dancers, but I found out that dancing and talking simultaneously is impossible for a complete novice like me. I cannot keep track of the rhythm, know where my feet are, and speak coherent sentences at the same time. Not yet, anyway.

I tried and tried to figure out why these people I was learning from, with and about were so passionate about Balkan music, when very few of them had ancestors that came from that region of the world. What connection did they have? For me, my father was in tamburitza orchestras for many years. We watched Frankie Yankovic on TV every week, and polka’d at weddings and parties. Even though I’d never learned the line dances, at least the music was familiar. I realized it was a part of my heritage. But many of my new friends heard something else in the music, felt something I didn’t know about in the group dances.

I guess the closest I can come to an answer is this: they love music, and happened to connect with this music, and they love people. And sharing the one with the other creates a synergy that rises above the ordinary to something bigger and richer. And just plain happier!

The most impressive thing about this week in the woods was the spirit of fellowship: the friendliness, the willingness to help clean up or help a fellow musician with a difficult passage, the lack of ego, the sharing at all levels.

Let’s see . . . a marriage proposal, a wedding anniversary . . . some significant life events happened that week at Mendocino Balkan camp, and we all were privileged to share in them. There was some significant music made, too, and some important friendships. I’d like to thank all of those who shared their talents to make Balkan camp something I will always remember and treasure. I truly appreciate the opportunity to have been a part of it.

2007

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Thank you for your generous support of the East European Folklife Center! Our 2007 membership drive brought in \$33,333, with 478 of your households and organizations joining in support of EEFC's programs. In addition, we received \$3,410 for our Dick Crum/Kef Scholarship fund and \$13,185 towards our Nest Egg fund. Our 2008 drive is just beginning--please see our website for a list of current donors, and to add your name to that list by joining or rejoining the EEFC today. Consider an additional donation to our scholarship fund, or to our Nest Egg fund.

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THANK YOU!

I N M E M O R I A M

Mirjana Laušević 1966-2007

By Suzanne Ahmed Leonora



Photo by Margaret Loomis
 Mirjana at Buffalo Gap in 1993.

We lost Minja this summer, shockingly early. I don't think I'll ever get over it, and I don't hope to. She was an extraordinary woman: ethnomusicologist, wife, mother, musician, teacher, and good at all of it; inspiring, vibrant, loving, joyous, brilliant, articulate, graceful, gracious and of superb character. Whether as her student, colleague or simply friend, we are blessed to have known her.

Mirjana "Minja" Laušević was a native of Sarajevo, Yugoslavia. As a student at the University of Sarajevo, she did ethnomusicology fieldwork in the mountain villages around Sarajevo. The civil war of the '90s destroyed those villages, and Minja became a living archive of their vocal music and its contexts.

Minja earned her M.A. (1993) and Ph.D. (1998) in ethnomusicology at Wesleyan University, publishing many articles and one book about ethnic music in rural and urban Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia and the United States. She was Associate Professor of music at the University of Minnesota, where she worked with local immigrant communities from around the world and was recently granted tenure. She spent her last academic year sharing the Valentine Professorship at Amherst College with her husband and constant collaborator, ethnomusicologist Tim Eriksen.

Minja's musical activities included directing the Bosnian choir Yu-Etno and the Bosnian-American band Žabe i Babe, and singing a lot of shape-note hymns; she and Tim led a large group of Romanians in singing shape notes for the movie "Cold Mountain" (2004). Minja taught at Balkan Music & Dance Workshops on both coasts over the course of several years and was a member of EEFC.

Her remarkable 2006 book, *Balkan Fascination*, examines the American Balkan music and dance scene and its roots, drawing broader insights about passion and taste, and how Americans see themselves and their place in the world.

Minja died July 15, 2007, in Northampton, Ma., from what was reported as a recurring illness. She is survived by her husband Tim Eriksen, son Luka (5), daughter Anja (3), brother Dragan of Whistler, British Columbia, and mother Nadežda, of Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. The CD "Drumovi," which Minja recorded with Žabe i Babe and the 1997-edition Teodosievski Ensemble, is available on cdbaby.com.

If you knew Minja, please go to http://www.wmsmc.org/minja_memorial.php and leave something in the memory book for Luka and Anja. To contribute to the Luka and Anja Eriksen Education Fund, write a check to Peter Irvine with "Eriksen" in the memo field, and mail it to Law Office of Peter Irvine, 76 King Street, Northampton, MA 01060. You may also help by buying Tim's music, also available on cdbaby.com.

BLASTS *from* THE PAST

*Starting with this issue
we will be sharing photos
of camps long ago
and far away.
Fashions, hair color and
body shape may change,
but so many things
stay the same...*

MENDOCINO 1984



▲ Stew Mennin (back to us) conducts his brass band class for singers including our longtime Mendocino chef Jeff O'Connor and singing teacher Ruth Hunter. Photo by Barbara Cordes.

- ▼ The cool Carol Silverman and Mark Levy lead a "Gypsy" set in Paul's Hall. Other musicians include Ismail Butera, Bill Cope, Souren Baronian and Rowan Storm. Photo by Margaret Loomis.

BUFFALO GAP 1988



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