

# Puttin' on the Dance Mission

## What?

*Puttin' On the Dance: A Conference for Northeast Dance Organizers* convenes dance organizers from across the Northeastern US and Canada. The objective of this weekend event is to provide resources and opportunities for learning, sharing, renewal and fun! This will strengthen networks for sustaining dance organizers, who in turn sustain a vital tradition of social dance in our region.

## Who?

The conference is especially for organizers of any English/American dance series in Northeastern United States and Canada, including contra, square, English Country Dance, gender role free, family, and community dances. Space permitting, others interested in dance series management, whether from other regions or not currently organizing dances, are also welcome to attend.

## How?

This residential weekend will provide plenty of time and space for conferees to...

- participate in sessions focusing on specific pertinent topics
- gain new skills and inspiration
- find out about existing resources and help create new ones
- talk shop and share stories with peers
- dance, eat, have fun and rejuvenate
- bring renewed energy and effective leadership back to local dances and the broader music and dance community.

## Why?

We conference organizers are passionate about our vital tradition of social dance. We recognize that this particular tradition brings people together in uniquely healthy and joyful ways that are both important and rare in our culture.

Typical practices of traditional American/English social dance include dancing with many people in a night, both as partners and neighbors; making eye contact and generally exhibiting positive regard for one's fellow dancers; and being active contributors in the co-creation of the event.

In part because of such typical norms, these dances build community – bringing individuals together across a host of potential divergences such as age, lifestyle, vocation, religion, political convictions, gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, income-level, class, educational background, and, of course, levels of dancing skill and experience.

Traditional American/English social dance also reinforces cooperation. Given the structure of the dances themselves, all dancers must work together in concert with the caller and musicians for the collective success of each dance sequence as well as the entire evening. This binding-together in pursuit of a common goal is inherent in sustaining healthy and vibrant communities in general.

It is a blessing to have organizers who enable us to gather at our local dance halls on a regular and ongoing basis!

Therefore, it is absolutely crucial to support those dance organizers, whose commitment of personal resources (time, energy, spirit, and sometimes money) manifests in such positive ways. We are thrilled that the *Puttin' On the Dance* conference can be a vehicle for nourishing many of the people who are dedicated to "puttin' on the dance" in their own home communities.