

CALLERS

Chris Riccotti



With a welcoming presence and clear calling style, Chris has been the inspiration and leader for the creation of a diverse dance community throughout the Northeast. In 1988, Chris initiated a gender-free dance in Jamaica Plain, MA, that is now a regular series with two dances a month. He also organized the Lavender Country and Folk Dancers, who hold two weekend dance camps a year and work with other groups for gender-free dance series. Much in demand because of his varied repertoire, Chris, in addition to new and traditional contras, calls patter and singing squares, international folk, English & Scottish Country Dancing, Scandinavian turning couple dances, Vintage Dancing, and 1910's & 1920's couple dances. Because of people like Chris, we now see many more people comfortable dancing with same gender partners or reversing roles.

Janine Smith



The Janine Smith experience is what you get when you cross a howdy-ma'am-BBQ-and-beans Honky Tonk with Zoom contra and sprinkle on some twinkly lights for sass. She'll bring you a night of fun dances, lively contras, squares, heck maybe a singing square, whether you're sitting, standing, or somewhere in between. Her teaching is clear and to-the-point, though she has been known to goof around a bit. She's one of the "Hot Square Babes," a quintet of female callers who threw a monthly Square Dance Party in the DC area from 2004-2018, and a founding member of the DC Square Dance Collective.

MUSICIANS

Julie Metcalf



Julie Metcalf, fiddler and violist, can often be spotted at contra and English dances in the Boston area, either on stage playing fiddle or on the dance floor. Coming from a family of musicians, she was encouraged to make music from an early age; Julie picked up the violin for the first time when she was 4 years old and has been playing ever since. Julie holds a degree in Violin Performance from Berklee College of Music. Julie currently performs with her 8-piece band, The New Grown-Ups, blending traditional folk, country, blues, celtic, old-time, originals, and bluegrass, with joy! She has played many styles of music, from Celtic chamber music to Mariachi, and old-time fiddle tunes are her very favorite. She loves connecting with people through music and dance.

Max Newman



Max Newman has developed a reputation as a favorite amongst dance musicians and dancers across North America and the UK. With a keen interest in New England music and dance, Max has graced many a dance hall playing with luminaries of the style. Max and monster fiddler Julie Metcalf have played for many years, and their duo is known for bringing a big sound.

His primary project is **The Stringrays**, a supergroup headed by New England fiddle legend Rodney Miller, with Stuart Kenney, Sam Bartlett, and Mark “Pokey” Hellenberg. He also plays with the **Red Case Band** and **Stove Dragon**. In addition to making music, Max has been involved with organizing several events and bringing a focus on intergenerational participation, including American Week (2023-2025) and Youth Dance Weekend (2011-2021).

CALLIOPE

Amy Cann, fiddle; Vince O'Donnell, fiddle; Norb Spencer, accordion; Carol Compton, keyboards; Marco Brehm, bass.

Amy Cann



Amy Cann spent the first twenty years of her life becoming a violinist and the next ten becoming a fiddler. The first began in the excellent public schools of upstate NY and continued through a Bachelors in Strings/Pedagogy from the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam; the second with an apprenticeship at the elbow of Jay Ungar, then a journeyman stint through hundreds of contradances, kitchen junkets, and pub sessions throughout the northeast. These days she's a church organist, dance caller, music theater director, Suzuki camp clinician, and piano/theory teacher — but what she loves best is to sit squarely on the fence between the classical and trad world and help folks climb over from either side.

Ray Salvo



Ray is a clarinetist and dancer from the Boston area. He was introduced to music and dance through his parents, both avid folk dancers and musicians. Ray grew up playing classical music in youth symphonies in and around Boston and in college. He has taught, competed and performed at dance events all over the country enjoying Latin, Ballroom, Country Western, Swing and Folk dance. It was through his love of Folk dance that he found a path to continue playing music. He has performed as part of a variety of dance bands including Metamorpheus, Calliope, Pandora, Jump Start and Hot Air, as well as many pickup bands.

Vince O'Donnell



Vince plays fiddle for English, Contra and Scottish dancing. He discovered country dance music in 1965, through Dudley Laufman and the Canterbury Country Orchestra. A former jazz guitar player, Vince loves ensemble interaction, harmonizing and improvising, along with the challenge of keeping all of that reasonably within traditional bounds and making it fun for the dancers. Every once in a while, he manages to compose a tune, and he supports outreach to new musicians, both adults and children. He serves on the NEFFA Board, and was a founding director of the Dance Musicians Development Fund of the Folk Arts Center of New England. Vince has spent years steeped in the New England traditional music scene bringing his love of improvisation to traditional tunes.

Bruce Randall



Bruce Randall, a multi-talented trombone and whistle player, is a specialist in English "West Gallery" music and English & American dance music. He is also a prolific composer of Shape-Note tunes and member and director of Norumbega Harmony. A long-time member of Calliope, Bruce is in demand as a musician at NEFFA and dances throughout New England and beyond.

Norb Spencer



Norb Spencer is a sought-after accordion player for Scottish and country dance music. He can be heard on *Peace and Plenty: Scottish Music in America* and as a member of Dogtown, a Connecticut-based contra dance band and Pandora—as well as Calliope.

Marco Brehm



Double bass player Marco Brehm has played for cabaret, dances, concert performances and recordings. He has played for folk dances throughout the US and has performed jazz, classical and new music at Lincoln Center, New York's Town Hall, the Yale School of Music.

Carol Compton



Carol grew up in a family steeped in music and dance from all over the world. In college she gave up performing classical music in favor of playing for contra, English Country, and Colonial era dance in the Philadelphia area, before returning to her native New Hampshire in the 1990s. She has performed at the Smithsonian and Winterthur, has played festivals and dances from Ontario to West Virginia, teaches workshops for dance musicians, and has been spotted playing for Morris dancers from the hills of New Hampshire to the streets of Southern England. Carol can be heard on the 2000 Smithsonian Folkways Recording “Choose Your Partner,” playing with the contra dance band Northern Spy and appears in the contra dance video “What’s Not to Like?” Carol plays piano, recorder, accordion and leads dance musician workshops and open bands for contra, family, and English dances. When not teaching or playing for dancers she serves as Operations Coordinator/ Education Programs Director at the Brattleboro Music Center in Vermont.