

Around Moab

Contra Dance to Live Celtic Music in Grand Junction

By Sharon Sullivan

Attend contra dances with or without a partner – either way is fine as you’ll end up dancing with everyone before the night is over. In western Colorado a contra dance is scheduled Saturday, January 17, at the Moose Lodge, 567 25-1/2 Road, in Grand Junction.

Somewhat similar to square dancing, contra dancers form two parallel lines, to perform a series of moves with each other before one partner progresses down the line, eventually dancing with everyone in the line.

There’s a 30-minute beginners’ workshop before the contra dance begins where you’ll learn all the steps you need to know throughout the evening. Caller Ron Young will also teach and cue the dances as they happen, with the band Fifth Reel performing live Celtic music. Fifth Reel is comprised of pianist Connie Michael, fiddle player Norm Ashley and guitar-player Dave Bumgarner.

A Family Dance will be held 5-6:30 p.m., prior to the contra dance – which is a great opportunity to bring youngsters ages 5 and older. Many dancers come early for the family dance, and stay for the contra dance, from 7-10 p.m.

One thing that makes these family dances incredibly special, said Michael, is that the dances are taught by local

music schoolteacher Judd Berry, while his own kids and his nieces and nephews perform the music for the dance.

“It’s kids dancing to kids’ playing music,” Michael said.

Grand Junction contra dances happen monthly in the spring and fall—alternating with English Country Dances and International Dances. In addition to local Grand Valley residents, the events often draw people from Montrose, Glenwood, Rifle and Moab.

The Moose Lodge has a large wooden floor, perfect for dancing, said Michael.

“It has a wonderful dance space on the ground floor,” she said. “It’s huge, and the acoustics are wonderful.”

Michael founded the contra dance events in Grand Junction 25 years ago; she said she loves seeing young people who have grown up coming to the contra dances, and now drive themselves to the events.

“Some have grown up, married, and invited us to play at their wedding receptions, and then come back (to the dances) with their own children,” Michael said. “Three to four couples have met at contra dances and ended up getting married.”

Cost to attend is \$15 for adults; \$6 for students, and \$5 for ages 5-18. Under 5 is free. Check out Fifth Reel’s web site at: www.fifthreelmusicanddance.com



Collaborative Exhibition at The Art Center of Western Colorado

The Art Center of Western Colorado and Museums of Western Colorado are pleased to announce the opening of a cooperative exhibition: *Happy Trails: Early Colorado in the Storytelling Art of Harold Bryant and Jack Roberts*. This is a beautiful blend of Colorado history and art.

Many recognize the early to mid-20th century as the peak of Western art, with Colorado exemplifying this high point through the work of Harold Bryant and Jack Roberts.

Harold Bryant (1894–1950), who grew up and worked in the Grand Valley, has been called a “maverick with a paint brush.” Bryant’s art captures the “realistic” cowboy working with cattle and horses on the open range.

Meanwhile, Jack Roberts (1920–2000), who settled in Redstone, Colorado, specialized in telling the “story” of the West. His vibrant, colorful paintings ranged from cowboys and Indians to miners and historic expeditions. Shared in this exhibition are two series of works that convey unique stories. One depicts the life of Ute native people throughout the twelve months of the year. The second series recounts the saga of President Theodore Roosevelt’s 1905 hunting trip to the Glenwood Springs area.

Discover the beauty and excitement of early Colorado through the works of Harold Bryant and Jack Roberts in this unique exhibit showcasing artistic and historic treasures from both The Art Center of Western Colorado and Museums of Western Colorado.

Exhibition Duration: *Happy Trails* is on display at The Art Center of Western Colorado, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Tuesday through Saturday, December 6, 2025, through April 17, 2026.

This collaborative exhibition will be followed by a second cooperative exhibition—*Spiderwoman to Trading Posts: Diné Weavings*. This exhibition, which features the regional Navajo weaving patterns, will be on exhibit at the Museums of the West/Museums of Western Colorado from January 17, 2026, to March 21, 2026.

Shenna Hayden, Museums of Western Colorado’s Executive Director, states that “This collaboration allows us to celebrate Colorado’s rich heritage through the lens of two remarkable artists. We are proud to partner with The Art Center of Western Colorado to create an exhibition that deepen connections and spark curiosity across our region. By bringing together history and art, we’re not only honoring the stories of our past but also inviting our community to experience them in new and inspiring ways.”

Lee Borden, The Art Center’s Executive Director, stated that he is “thrilled to be collaborating with The Museum of Western Colorado on these exhibitions. A partnership between our two august institutions is long overdue and is a natural fit. I couldn’t be happier.”



Moon of Popping Trees



Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum

Park Hours

(Mar-Nov): Open 7 Days a Week - **9am-5pm**

(Dec-Feb): Open 7 Days a Week - **9am-3pm**

Closed: Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve/Day
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660 West, 400 North, in Blanding, Utah.

For more information please call the Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum at (435) 678-2238

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