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Annual town & gown event to feature folk dancing

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NEWS RELEASE

Oct. 25, 2007

Contact: Vicki Watson, faculty adviser to the UM student chapter of the Missoula Folklore Society, 243-5153, vicki.watson@umontana.edu.

ANNUAL TOWN & GOWN EVENT TO FEATURE FOLK DANCING

MISSOULA –

The University of Montana's student chapter of the Missoula Folklore Society will host UM's Fifth Annual Town & Gown Dance from 8 to 11 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 3, in the University Center Ballroom.

A form of folk dancing known as contra dancing will be the focus of the event. Contra is folk dance drawn from Americanized old English country dances, square dances and Appalachian circle dances.

Sleeping Child String Band, known for its lively Irish and Appalachian fiddle music, will supply the music. A beginning workshop will be held at 7:30 p.m. Organizers urge all people to attend. Dances will be taught and no experience or partner is needed.

Vicki Watson, a professor in UM's environmental studies program and faculty adviser to the student group, said that anyone who can walk can contra dance. The evening will be "great exercise, wonderful fun and very social but non-threatening," she said.

Watson said anyone from a beginner to an experienced dancer will be able to join in. Callers will teach all the steps for the dances and continue calling while the band plays traditional

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music from America, England and Ireland.

The event is alcohol-, drug- and tobacco-free. Cost is \$8 for the general public and \$6 for UM students and MFS members. For more information on contra dancing, visit

<http://www.thecommonspace.org/2002/06/games.php>.

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