

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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BLOOMINGTON HOSTS FOURTH ANNUAL MIDWESTERN MORRIS DANCE ALE

If you are outside on Memorial Day weekend and happen to see a large group of colorfully dressed dancers jingling bells and waving handkerchiefs or clashing sticks, you will be witnessing a rite of Spring known as the Fourth Annual Midwestern Morris Ale.

Sponsored by Bloomington's Quarry Morris Team, the Midwest Morris Ale is an annual gathering of 17 teams of dancers from throughout the Midwest and Canada. Each year they convene for three days of dancing, workshops, and public performances, and this year for the first time Bloomington will host the group.

Morris dancing has its origins in the ancient ritual dancing of England, where each Spring is welcomed by groups of colorful dancers wearing bells, clashing sticks, and singing to wake up the earth to a new season of fruitfulness. It has enjoyed a recent revival of interest, both here and in its native England, and dancers all over North America now join in the traditional May Day dancing to herald the arrival of Spring.

The gathering of more than 150 dancers will be in residence at McCormick's Creek State Park through the weekend, and smaller groups of forty to fifty dancers will tour the area, stopping to perform on the following schedule:

Saturday, May 26

11:45	Spencer Public Square
12 noon	Bloomington Courthouse Square
1:30	People's Park, corner Kirkwood & Dunn, Bloomington
2:30	Riddle Point, Lake Monroe Paynestown Recreational Area
3:30	Bryan Park, Bloomington
4:30	Mass dance (all dancers present) McCormick's Creek State Park

Each performance will run for at least half an hour; some of the performances run simultaneously.

On Sunday all the dancers will gather for a mass dance in Dunn Meadow, corner of 7th and Indiana in Bloomington, at 2 pm. The public is invited to come see this spectacle of beribboned, bejangled people dancing together . . . and good luck and prosperity will be theirs for their presence!

All performances are free and open to the public. Children, too, will be amused by the dancing.