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# Language lessons, instructional classes ethnic food and music keep traditions

**Lakeland celebrates annual International Folk Festival**

by LIZ EBERLY

KIRTLAND — Gaelic anyone? Ciamar a tha sibh? Tha mi gu math, tapadh leibh. (How are you? I'm well, thank you.) What could be better than a spring afternoon spent learning about different cultures and an evening spent being entertained by ethnic music and dance?

Nothing is better according to the Lakeland Community College's Fourth Annual Lake County International Folk Festival, held Saturday, March 10 at the college's main campus, the festival featured presentations, food, music and activities such as storytelling, dancing lessons and kimono dressing.

"The festival is designed to underscore the rich cultural diversity of Northeast Ohio," said Dr. Jennifer Forster, interim director, international education and assistant professor of history.

One presentation featured a beginning lesson in Gaelic taught by Frances Acar of the Great Lakes Gaelic Society.

"There are only 18 letters in Gaelic," Acar said. "It makes filling easier."

Once one of the most widely spoken languages, Gaelic was in danger of completely disappearing.



Courtney Gras of Aurora and 15-year-old Andrea Horvath of North Royalton are members of the Hungarian Csárdás Dance Company. Their group will be going to Hungary this summer for a dance camp.



Jurlee Thomas wears a traditional Nigerian headwrap and head wrap at the Lake County Festival. The beads in her necklaces also.

PHOTOS BY LIZ EBERLY

each October the Royal National Mod is held at a different location in Scotland. A Mod is a competition-based festival which cele-

brates and cultures alive is through storytelling. Robin Pease is the artistic director of Kulture Kids, an education theatre program that

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words were magic and to remind the world that all people have the power of imagination," Pease said.

The festival also included some educational displays about the different immigrant groups that settled in the greater Cleveland area.

In 1856, the first iron mill, the Cleveland Rolling Mill brought many Polish immigrants to Cleveland.

From 1870 to 1920 the Hungarian immigrants settled near and on Buckeye Road. At one time, there were more than 9,000 Hungarians in the area.

More than 120,000 Romanians immigrated to the United States between 1895 and 1914.

One way to celebrate different cultures is to enjoy the ethnic foods of different countries. On hand at the Folk Festival were groups serving Greek, Cajun, and Mexican along with Eastern European food.

During the afternoon, festival goers could burn off the calories from the ethnic foods by learning three different styles of traditional dance.

Festival guests could learn an Italian dance, a Hungarian dance and several different Japanese dances.

Members of the Verlezza Dance Company of Shaker Heights taught the Tarantella, a lively whirling dance from Southern Italy.

The Csárdás Dance Company of Cleveland taught the Ligós or Jumping Dance from Hungary and the Shogun Japanese Dance



Members of the Verlezza Dance Company demonstrate the big finish to the Tarantella, an Italian dance at the International Folk Festival.



Members of the Japanese Talko Drummers show that it takes a lot of control and strength to play their hand-made drums at the International Folk Festival.



Members of the Csárdás Dance Company perform Hungarian Folk Dances at the Folk Festival held at Lakeland Community College.