

**Texas International Folk Dancers**  
**Texas Camp Special Survey**  
**Report to the Board**  
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**Franklin & Dena Houston**

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# Special Survey Report

## Message to the Board

This is the first comprehensive survey of current and former TIFD members regarding Texas Camp. The opinions come from 58% of the adults who attended Texas Camp in 2005. The opinions also come from people who had decided (for various reasons) to not attend that camp. Therefore, the Board and Camp Chairs need to consider the survey results as a strong message of what the folk dance community wants from Texas Camp. The Board and Camp Chairs need to make decisions reflecting that message in order to improve the health and continuation of Texas Camp.

Conclusions and recommendations regarding specific camp activities are described in this report. Additional recommendations regarding administration of surveys are as follows:

- 70 people who attended Texas Camp 2005 filled out this survey, as compared to 55 people who filled out the survey at camp. We recommend that the Board consider conducting camp surveys after camp.
- Compiling results and preparing the report for this survey was an exhausting process. However, in order to get answers to critical questions about Texas Camp, such a survey was necessary. It is unrealistic to expect administrators for the annual Texas Camp survey to expend comparable amounts of effort to provide (in a timely fashion) the information that the Board needs about Texas Camp. We recommend that the Board consider use of an electronic survey (such as found at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/>), which would allow the survey administrator to design the survey, collect responses, analyze results and produce a report for the Board much easier and quicker than has been done in the past. If adopted, this procedure should be advertised at camp to promote response after camp.
- Because those who took the time and effort to respond to this survey will want to know that their voices were heard and that the Board intends to listen to what they said, we recommend that the Board post the survey results on the TIFD web site, with an announcement of that action in the monthly e-letter and the TIFD News. This should enhance future response to camp surveys.

## Overview

In both 2004 and 2005, Texas Camp attendance estimates were not met by a significant amount. As a result, Franklin Houston asked the Board at the 2005 Texas Camp to authorize him to administer a special survey to current and previous TIFD members. The goal was to provide more comprehensive and accurate information on what campers want from Texas Camp. The Board approved the proposal and the survey was sent out with the Board of Trustees election ballot in December of 2005. It was also sent at the same time to many former members of TIFD (444 surveys in all were sent out). The survey questions addressed most (if not all) of the significant issues surrounding Texas Camp. Key issues were campers' concerns with the busy schedule, the countries and instructors for teaching in any given year, the amount of live music at parties and the failure of the parties to include enough of campers' dance requests.

## Analysis

Bob Madrulli received 97 survey responses, which constituted an overall response rate of 22%. Most questions were of the “select one of these” or “select all that apply” variety. For those questions, responses were added and the total expressed as a percentage of the number of responses. The tabulations for questions #5, 10, 12, 13 & 14 were expressed as numbers on a scale from 1 to 100, rather than as a percentage, due to ranking of items within those questions. The final numbers for question #12 included numbers from #13 and #14. Responders’ comments are posted with the questions to which they refer and are bulleted. Conclusions (in bold type) were reached for each question, based upon the numerical tabulations. From those conclusions and the comments received with many of the surveys, recommendations (in bold type) are provided for the Board to consider.

## Results, Conclusions and Recommendations

### 1. How many years have you been folk dancing?

Average years folk dancing – 25 years.

***This suggests that teaching sessions and party programs should be geared toward experienced, but older, dancers (while not ignoring new dancers).***

### 2. Gender Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_

Male 37%; Female 67%.

***If this ratio is comparable to camp attendance, it should be kept in mind when programming partner and non-partner dances.***

### 3. How many Camps did you attend between 1998 and 2005?

Average of 5.4 out of 8 camps.

***However, attendees at Texas Camp 2005 averaged 6.4 camps, while non-attendees averaged 3.0 camps. Therefore, party programs should include dances from no less than the last 5 or 6 camps in order to provide request dancing for all campers.***

### 4. Did you attend Texas Camp 2005? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Yes – 72%; No – 28%.

***Since a significant percentage of responders were those who didn’t attend Texas Camp 2005 but were interested enough to fill out this survey, consideration should be given toward special recruitment efforts to get those people to come back to Texas Camp.***

### 5. Rank the items below in order of importance (most important as #1) as your reasons for attending Texas Camp.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a) <u>41</u> Dancing to live music at parties     | d) <u>15</u> Performing live music at parties     |
| b) <u>64</u> Doing my favorite dances at parties  | e) <u>60</u> Socializing with friends – old & new |
| c) <u>56</u> Learning dances at teaching sessions | f) <u>20</u> Other (specify)(20 other reasons)    |

- More request dancing. Missed the variety of dances at parties that we used to have with request dancing. Missed being able to see and relearn dances forgotten by our group but done by other groups at parties.
- Great traditions and friends and mostly fine teaching.

- There are many other camps available. This camp has good food and friends. We are here to dance.

**All rankings are on a 1 to 100 scale. The indicated values were calculated from the average of all rankings and the number of responses for each item. Based upon "Doing my favorite dances at parties" receiving the highest score of 64, the "Tops" dance list is very important for party programming. Therefore, it should be expanded on the registration form to allow more choices and produce greater consensus. Since socializing is also important, the number and/or length of activities at camp should be reduced to avoid activity overlap and provide free time. Finally, since teaching sessions are important, popular instructors and countries should be selected in order to reclaim previous campers and retain current campers.**

**6. Please mark each of the items below that would be a factor in your decision to not attend Texas Camp. (check all that apply)**

<u>28%</u> I can't afford to come to camp	<u>12%</u> My dance requests aren't played at parties
<u>16%</u> I can't take off from work	<u>21%</u> My friends/family won't be there
<u>27%</u> I can't/don't want to be away from friends/family over Thanksgiving	<u>14%</u> My health keeps me from attending camp
<u>4%</u> I don't like attending a multi-day camp	<u>3%</u> The dancing is too intimidating for me
<u>7%</u> I don't like the accommodations	<u>1%</u> The teaching is too intimidating for me
<u>30%</u> I don't like the featured teachers	<u>10%</u> There's not enough live music
<u>7%</u> I don't like the type of meals that are served	<u>15%</u> There's too much live music
<u>11%</u> I don't want to travel the distance to camp	<u>25%</u> Other (specify)(18 other reasons, ranging from 1% to 3% each)

- It might get too expensive for four of us.
- I do get tired of not knowing whether the twin beds will be the same height to make one large bed.
- Camp sounds wonderful, but time with my daughter has priority.
- We've always enjoyed the three times going to Texas Camp, but it is a long way from Georgia. That's why we don't make it very often.
- My only reasons for not attending have been personal. I have enjoyed every camp I've been to since 1994.

**In addition to the 15 original factors stated, responders stated 18 additional reasons for not attending Texas Camp. They were as follows:**

- **As long as someone gives me a ride, I'll come.**
- **Bad party programming.**
- **Bad schedule.**
- **Don't like/care for dance styles being taught.**
- **Family illness.**
- **Family obligations.**
- **I don't like rude cliques.**
- **I spend too much time working and wrangling kids to dance.**
- **Interminably long sets of dances that require a partner.**
- **Lack of child care.**

- **Lack of last-minute or one-day registration.**
- **More people are sitting and fewer are dancing.**
- **Not enough request dancing at parties.**
- **Not enough variety in live music by the guest artists during parties.**
- **Other activities.**
- **Stupid party themes.**
- **Too many camps; not enough time.**
- **Would rather spend the money on (other things).**

**Based upon the indicated percentages, the following recommendations were developed:**

- Reduce fees by reducing costs**
- Emphasize part-time registration**
- Make sure teachers have high request ratings and low or no negative ratings from special survey and from Camp survey**
- Do better collection of requests before and at camp; play top requests more than once during camp**

**7. How important is the Family Program to your decision to attend Texas Camp? (check one)**

- 6% I can only attend Texas Camp if a Family Program is offered
- 16% The Family Program might influence my decision to attend Texas Camp
- 78% Having a Family Program does not affect my decision to attend Texas Camp

**Since a small (but important) group of campers desire the Family Program, it should be continued. In order to not impact costs for others, children's camp fees should be based only upon Greene Family Camp's base charge for lodging and meals, plus the Family Program cost.**

**8. What type of schedule do you prefer at Texas Camp? (check one)**

- 19% Full schedule with a choice of concurrent activities
- 36% Full schedule with no concurrent activities
- 45% Relaxed schedule with built-in free time (i.e., occasionally no scheduled activities)

- I would like to see at least one singing session that does not conflict with (Camp) Band practice.
- Offer concurrent dance classes of quite different types so that everyone has a better chance to choose a class that they enjoy or that is easy enough or advanced enough for them.

**Since 81% of responders want a more relaxed schedule with some free time, the attractiveness of camp would be increased by reducing the number and/or length of activities in order to avoid activity overlaps and to provide free time.**

**9. Why do you dance at Texas Camp parties? (check all that apply)**

- 68% To do dances new to me
- 65% To dance familiar dances to new music
- 87% To dance familiar dances to familiar music

- I dance at parties to revive older dances.
- No teaching during parties, please! It murders the energy. Classes are classes; parties are parties.

**Based upon the indicated order of preference, familiar dances done to familiar music should be emphasized at parties.**

**10. How interested are you in having the following types of dances taught at Texas Camp?** Preferences were adjusted to the following scale: Want it taught = 100; No preference = 50; Don't want it taught = 0. The following numbers were produced:

- a) 92 Circle/Line dances      c) 81 Couple dances      e) 58 Other set dances  
b) 45 Contra dances      d) 64 Mixer dances

- I want contra dances done, not taught.
- There are enough contra events. Keep Texas Camp for folk dancing. A few dances are okay, but not to be an emphasis.

**Based upon the above numbers, Circle/Line dances and Couple dances should continue to be primary teaching themes. Contras, mixers and other set dances should not be primary teaching themes.**

**11. What kind of teaching would you like to see at Texas Camp? (check all that apply)**

- a) 69% I would like advanced dances taught  
b) 90% I would like intermediate dances taught  
c) 60% I would like beginning dances taught  
d) 31% I would like dances taught that are currently being done in my local group  
e) 74% I would like dances taught that are not currently being done in my local group

- A mix of beginning, intermediate and advanced dances taught is good.
- Whether a dance "sticks" locally is very important.
- It is time to reteach some of the old favorites that have been forgotten rather than more and more new dances that are rarely done after camp.
- When considering (dance teachers), check their dances to make sure they are not all simple dances.

**Since intermediate dances were much preferred over advanced or beginning dances, teaching should emphasize that type and limit the number of advanced and beginner dances. Dances not done in the responder's local group were much preferred over dances done in the responder's local group. Therefore, dances new to (or no longer done in) the TIFD area should be emphasized.**

**12. Please mark each country/region/ethnicity/style you would like to see taught at Texas Camp.**

**Some people decide to come to camp (or stay away from camp) based upon the specific country, region, ethnicity or style of dance to be presented. Therefore, each country's "value" was derived from the number of responders wanting to see dances from that country taught at Texas Camp plus a factor for most-liked votes minus a factor for least-liked votes. The average value was 28.2. The countries which had final values above the average were as follows:**

Bulgaria	104	Gypsy	72	Israel	43	Azerbaijan	30
Romania	100	Turkey	69	Vintage (USA)	42	Swing	29
Macedonia	83	Croatia	64	Slovakia	41	Italy	29
Greece	81	Sweden	55	Slovenia	38	Scotland	29
Serbia	80	Norway	52	Czech Republic	37	England	29
Hungary	80	Armenia	48	Ukraine	35		
International mix	77	France	46	Basque	31		

- This is hard to answer, since I've never seen many of these countries' dances. Also, it's unclear whether it matters how recently a country's dances have been taught. I'm not considering any of the above in my answer.
- Israeli dances are not my favorite because they are so "made up" and not "folk created".
- Teacher is more important than the country.
- I think it would be exciting to learn some dances from a larger variety of countries. However, having an excellent teacher should be a factor in choosing the nationality. If there is not a good teacher, let's find a nationality (teacher) that has proven knowledge and teaching skills.

***The other 35 countries had final values below the average and included quite a few which were not on the list sent out in the survey but which were suggested by responders. It is interesting to note that 8 of the top 10 were Balkan countries or ethnicities.***

**13. Of the items in question #12 which you marked, please list your most-liked five, starting with your most favorite.**

***The average "most-liked value" for all countries listed or suggested was 6.61. The countries which had values above the average (i.e., the most liked) were as follows:***

Bulgaria	26	Gypsy	15	Sweden	12	Armenia	9
Romania	25	Macedonia	15	International mix	10	Vintage (USA)	8
Greece	19	Turkey	14	Croatia	10	England	8
Hungary	17	Serbia	12	Norway	9	Israel	8

***The top 12 in "most liked" were also in the top 12 overall. Therefore, selection of any of those countries should be popular with a majority of campers.***

**14. Of the items in question #12 which you didn't mark, please list your least-liked five, starting with your least favorite.**

***The average "least-liked value" for all countries listed or suggested was 6.77. The countries which had values above that average (i.e., the least liked) were as follows:***

Argentine Tango	21	Swing	12	Cajun/Zydeco	10	Scotland	8
Africa	20	Switzerland	12	Vintage (USA)	10	Mexico	8
Germany	18	England	11	Denmark	8	Russia	7
Poland	12	Netherlands	11	Ireland	8	S. America	7

- There's not a dance I don't like, just a dance I don't know yet.

***Note that two of the above countries – England and Vintage (USA) – also ranked above average in the overall and the "most liked" categories. Any consideration regarding their selection must be done very carefully. The three countries with least-liked values well above all of the others – Argentine Tango, Africa and Germany – should not be selected until their rankings improve in future surveys.***

**15. If you know of any teachers whom you would like to see teach at Texas Camp, please list them below.**

***Of the teachers suggested for Texas Camp, the average percentage of responders "voting" for any one teacher was 2.6%. The teachers having values above that average were as follows:***

Lee Otterholt	14.4%	Yves Moreau	13.4%	Steve Kotansky	8.2%
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Mihai David	5.2%	Richard Powers	4.1%	Miroslav Marcetic	3.1%
Michael Ginsburg	5.2%	Ingvar Sodal	4.1%	Sandy Starkman	3.1%
Roo Lester	5.2%	Tom Bozigian	3.1%	Marianne Taylor	3.1%
Ahmet Luleci	5.2%	Germain Hebert	3.1%	Theodor Vasilescu	3.1%
Larry Weiner	5.2%	Jaap Leegwater	3.1%		

***It is interesting that a teacher who has never been to Texas Camp received the most suggestions and that only two teachers received “votes” from more than 10% of the responders. It is also interesting that some responders listed teachers whose areas of teaching expertise were not preferred by those same responders. Based on this information, it appears that teachers may have been suggested primarily for their name recognition and not necessarily for their desirability. The Board and Camp Chairs should make every effort to ensure that the teachers selected for camp will be teaching the dances that people want to learn and that they will be a “draw” when camp is advertised.***

**16. Which special dance sessions enhance your enjoyment of Texas Camp? (check all that apply)**

- a) 62% Balkan Blowout (recorded music session of non-partner dances)
- b) 49% Bruceville Roadhouse (recorded music session of partner dances)
- c) 52% Contra session (live music session of contra dances)
- d) 47% Howdy Dances (live music international set at opening of camp on Thursday)
- e) 43% Hungarian táncház (recorded music session of Hungarian/Transylvanian dances)
- f) 39% Scandi session (live/recorded music session of Norwegian & Swedish dances)

- Please keep the táncház and keep it 45-60 minutes long.

***Since the highest ranked special dance session was Balkan Blowout, it should be put back into the schedule. Contra, Bruceville Roadhouse and Howdy Dances are lower ranked, but should still be continued. The two lowest ranked sessions are for more advanced, single-region types of dances and typically draw much of the same crowd. It would be nice to include them in the schedule, but that will invariably cause crowding of activities.***

**17. How important is the wooden dance floor to your enjoyment of dancing at Texas Camp? (check one)**

- a) 90% Very important
- b) 9% Moderately important
- c) 1% Not important

***As expected, campers want TIFD to do anything and everything necessary to maintain the wooden dance floor.***

**18. Which additional classes enhance your enjoyment of Texas Camp? (check all that apply)**

- a) 19% Camp Band rehearsals (preparation for performance at evening parties)
- b) 78% Culture sessions with dance teachers
- c) 21% Instrumental instruction classes (dance tunes) with guest artist
- d) 12% Instrumental instruction classes (non-dance tunes) with guest artist
- e) 42% Singing classes (dance tunes) with guest artist or local singing instructor
- f) 27% Singing classes (non-dance tunes) with guest artist or local singing instructor

- I really enjoy singing with a group. I would also enjoy beginning and advanced singing classes.

**Based upon the indicated level of interest, culture sessions should definitely be included in the schedule. Instrumental instruction and singing classes for dance tunes received significantly more support than the corresponding classes for non-dance tunes. Therefore, classes should be primarily on dance tunes rather than non-dance tunes.**

**19. Which dances would you like to dance to live music at Texas Camp parties? (check all that apply)**

- a) 38% Top 40” dances from camp registration forms
- b) 34% Dances requested during the parties
- c) 40% Dances taught that year at camp
- d) 59% International dance mix
- e) 32% Single country/region/ethnicity/style matching a theme of that year at camp
- f) 16% Single country/region/ethnicity/style of the music group’s choice
- g) 49% No preference, I enjoy dancing to any live music
- h) 13% None; I prefer to dance to recorded music
  - I prefer dancing specific dances, whether to live or recorded. I don't like the bands playing more generic music.
  - I like to do "village" dances (pravo, syrtos, hambo) that a lot of people can do, not pattern dances or "hot shot" stuff.
  - I like lots of live music performed by the real ethnics or musicians with extensive study of the music they are playing. Some of the campers are fine musicians, but they are students of the music, just as we are students of the dance. I don't like when the campers do the majority of the music.
  - Some live music is great, as long as the band knows it well and it doesn't cut into time for dancing.

**88% of the responders wanted “Top 40”, international mix or “any” live music and 95% wanted some type of live music (as opposed to no live music, even though a few responders marked both!). Therefore, live music activities should continue to be included in the schedule. The “favorite dances” section on the registration form should be greatly expanded (i.e., 25 or more slots) to allow more choices and campers should be strongly encouraged to fill it out. This would provide a much better consensus on which dances are favored by more of the campers. The Camp Band and local bands would then be able to emphasize a more diverse repertoire of tunes for identified popular dances.**

**20. In the chart below, please mark which expectations you feel are met by each person or group providing dance music for parties at Texas Camp. (check all that apply)**

Expectation	Camp Band	Guest Artist	Local Band	Party Programmer
Gets me up to dance	56%	56%	42%	73%
Makes the party more enjoyable for me	54%	64%	46%	64%
Plays dances that I requested at a party	12%	7%	11%	77%
Plays a good international mix	58%	12%	20%	84%
Plays good, different tunes or arrangements for familiar dances	47%	23%	30%	22%
Provides good quality performances	58%	69%	49%	n/a
Provides an interesting variety of	49%	38%	33%	21%

instrumentation and/or sound				
Replicates recorded music well	33%	16%	11%	n/a

- Could be worded more clearly.
- I don't expect the live music to replicate recorded music, nor do I want it to.
- Guest artist should provide good quality performances, but is not here for a concert!
- I really don't understand this question. It makes no sense. It varies from group to group and year to year.
- Poor question.
- I love dancing to live music, but unless it is played by artists specializing in it, the music at Texas Camp is usually not outstanding enough to separate it from recorded music. Tunes that are the same as recorded ones are too much the same to make me prefer one over the other. Tunes that are different from recorded ones are rarely played - that's a way live music could add something beyond recorded music. Small groups are better able to provide focused, energetic performances that go beyond what is provided by recorded music.
- Excessive live music is a problem when a) some dances are repeated; b) you have one hour of obscure music that few know how to dance; c) it preempts the opportunity to request dances, especially those that have not been done in home groups.
- Party programmers often take the stance that if a top 40 request dance has been played once at camp already, it should/would not be played again. I disagree. Popular, fun, well-known dances can be played again if requested.
- Bring back good programmers, please; there is no substitute for their interaction with the dancers, or for the variety they can provide.

***A number of "approval ratings" were predictably low, with many of them being outside the control of the respective group. After factoring out the not-so-relevant items for each group, the following average approval ratings were derived:***

- ***Camp Band – 51%***
- ***Local Band – 43%***
- ***Guest Artist – 57%***
- ***Party Programmer – 64%***

***All live music groups should consider more alternate versions to reduce comparisons to recorded music and must focus their repertoires (if applicable and appropriate) onto a list of identified popular dances that represents a much higher consensus of campers. The Camp Band should also have more pre-camp rehearsals to enhance proficiency on the more challenging tunes. Party programmers must improve their arrangement of dance tunes in party programs (i.e., do a better job of maintaining energy and the flow of the program) and increase their programming of requested dances.***

**21. When the Camp Band is playing, does the absence of band members from the dance floor reduce your enjoyment of those dances?**

***7%*** Always ***2%*** Most of the time ***30%*** Some of the time ***30%*** Rarely ***31%*** Never

- The absence of Camp Band members never reduces my enjoyment of the dances, unless it's a dance I love to do with Franklin!

***Based on the responses, it appears that the absence of Camp Band members from dancing has some, but not a significant, negative impact on the enjoyment of those who are dancing. Avoiding long set times for the Camp Band will help address this issue.***

**22. How would you prefer live music to be scheduled at a Texas Camp party? (check one)**

- a) 7% All live music  
b) 0% Single 2-hour set  
c) 2% Single 1-1/2 hour set  
d) 8% Single 1-hour set  
e) 9% Three to five 45-minute sets  
f) 35% Three to five 30-minute sets  
g) 36% Three to five 20-minute sets  
h) 3% No live music

- If a single-genre group is present, make the sets shorter.
- I think a single 1-hour live music set is best for the overall flow of the party (as opposed to several shorter sets).
- My idea of camp is Balkan Camp (EEFC), to which I go yearly. Lots of live music.
- Long sets of live music from one country or area take up time that could be used to keep up the many other dances that will eventually be forgotten if not danced at least once at camp.

***Live music in 2005 was set at 80 minutes for each party. The average of responses ranged from 92 minutes for each party (assuming three rather than five sets, for three of the options) to 109 minutes for each party (assuming five rather than three sets, for three of the options). Consequently, 100 minutes would be a reasonable time budget for live music for each party. Since parties need to extend from 8PM to 1AM and 80% of the responders preferred multiple sets rather than one extended period of live music, the distribution would be approximately four 25-minute sets or five 20-minute sets.***

**23. How important to you is the type of meals served at Texas Camp? (check one)**

- a) 12% Creative & interesting meals are a factor in my deciding to attend camp  
b) 52% Creative & interesting meals is important to my enjoyment of camp  
c) 30% Creative & interesting meals are nice but not necessary to my enjoyment of camp  
d) 5% The type of meals is not important to me

- Meals must taste good.
- Edible meals are important. Creative and interesting is often in conflict with my idea of edible.
- Food needs to be tasty, plentiful (most of all) and on time.
- Having vegan options is important.
- No more lamb and no fish.
- 10PM snack times are appreciated. 11PM is too late for me.

***The importance of meals averaged out to between "nice but not necessary" and "important to enjoyment". Therefore, a professional chef should still be used. Local talent should be considered in order to reduce costs.***

**24. Which shopping opportunities do you enjoy at Texas Camp? (check all that apply)**

- a) 78% Balkan Bazaar  
b) 44% Movin' Easy (dance footwear)  
c) 72% Sales by dance teachers  
d) 36% TIFD Book/recording sale  
e) 43% TIFD Silent Auction  
f) 45% TIFD t-shirts, syllabi, songbooks, etc.

- I do not want any vendor we have to pay for!
- I would like to see other vendors other than Balkan Bazaar.
- Prefer to not spend TIFD funds to bring in vendors (Balkan Bazaar). Very nice to have vendors at camp, but do we need to pay them for vending at camp?

***Balkan Bazaar was considered to be quite important. It offers a broad range of folk-related merchandise to campers. However, its presence results in a***

**significant expense to camp. For that reason, and since there were several comments expressing concern, the Board needs to decide if the estimated cost per camper for Balkan Bazaar is acceptable, based upon the degree of support indicated from the survey. If a decision is made to not invite Balkan Bazaar to camp, it would be prudent to poll the membership before undertaking that action. Movin' Easy was considered to be somewhat important. There was no cost to camp when it was present and it provided a service to campers. Therefore, the vendor should be invited again if there are no space limitations. Dance teachers' sales were considered to be quite important. There is no cost to camp and teachers expect to be able to sell recordings and related materials. Therefore, teachers' sales must be continued. The TIFD book/recording sale and silent auction were considered to be somewhat important. They have produced significant income for camp. However, staff is needed to administer those activities, they do require careful scheduling and they do constitute a cost to donors. Therefore, the Board should make a decision each year as to whether they will be included as camp activities. TIFD sales were considered to be somewhat important. Since the activity is useful and necessary with regard to certain items and it can be administered with volunteer staff, it should be continued.**

**25. Which reasons apply to your enjoyment of Texas Camp? (check all that apply)**

- a) 84% Being in a relaxed, low-stress environment
  - b) 88% Dancing with people outside of my local dance group
  - c) 44% Having the freedom to be crazy
  - d) 22% Opportunity for family time together at camp
  - e) 52% Opportunity for free time and to relax
  - f) 10% Opportunity to do skits
- Dancing with people outside my group is what camp has meant to me. It was great to see a return to more request dancing at the 2005 Camp.
  - Consider reasonable party themes like international costume night or live music night or 78RPM record night.

**Being in a relaxed, low-stress environment was ranked as extremely important. The number and/or length of activities in the schedule should be reduced to avoid activity overlap and to provide free time. Dancing with people outside a camper's local dance group was also ranked as extremely important. The camp schedule should be planned to maximize the length of organized parties in order to maximize the amount of those interactions. Having the freedom to be crazy was moderately important, but doesn't require action by the Board! Opportunity for family time together at camp was not very important and also doesn't require action by the Board. Opportunity for free time and to relax was moderately important. As with low-stress environment, the number and/or length of activities in the schedule should be reduced to avoid activity overlap and to provide free time. Opportunity to do skits was not important at all. Consequently, skits should not be included in the camp schedule, particularly since there is such a high concern about request dances not being played.**

**26. Please write additional comments here**

***Responders provided many comments. Most of the comments have been listed with the questions to which they refer. The following comments do not correspond to any particular survey question:***

- Thanks for asking these questions.
- This survey took me 45 minutes to fill out!
- When tallying all this up and trying to be as responsive as possible to people's wishes, just remember - you can't please all of the people all of the time.
- This is a very biased survey, also very confusing. Why not just ask what you want to know in a straightforward manner.
- Too many questions about live music.
- Please keep up the good work.
- Needs to recruit younger folks to dancing to preserve folk dance traditions.
- I feel that the decline in attendance is not so much due to deficiencies at Texas Camp, rather it's due to declining attendance within the member groups. Recruiting young members in all of the member groups should be the top priority.
- This survey is too long.
- Thank you for including current non-members and former attendees in this survey.
- Thanks for making this survey.
- You guys do a great job.
- The sooner the dance video is ready, the more easily the taught dances will be retained and spread to those who could not attend camp.
- Instead of hiring bands to come, lower the costs for more dancers to come.
- It was so convenient this last camp having all dancing in one building; easier on dancers and instructors and quite enjoyable.
- Thanks. We love you guys and the opportunity to play music and dance. Maybe have some international "kid" dances once or twice in the evening, some like Jimmy Drury has.
- I think dance camp is a great thing, even though I haven't had an opportunity to attend. Maybe some day when the stars come together just right, I will.
- A "buddy system" or "big brother, big sister" program would really help first or second-timers. It's not that people are unfriendly, but it is human nature to hang out with your old friends. As a new dancer, the one and only time I've gone, I found the entire experience overwhelming and intimidating. A sponsor or mentor would have gone a long way to encourage me.

## **Appendix**

### **Background**

In 2004, due to lack of qualified applicants for Camp Chair, the Board ran Texas Camp. Based upon the surveys from recent camps, Steve Kotansky and Bob Leibman were selected as teachers and Trio Slavej was selected to provide live music for Bob's teaching and culture sessions. The Board prepared a budget based upon attendance higher than at the 2003 camp, due to the presumed popularity of Steve and Bob. However, attendance was approximately the same as in 2003, the shortfall in adult full time paying registrations was 28 and camp experienced a significant deficit. In 2005, with two qualified persons in place as Camp Chairs, the Board approved the selection of Yaakov Eden and Roo Lester as teachers and Loretta Kelley to provide live music for Roo's teaching and culture sessions, based again upon the surveys from recent camps. In order to not repeat the experience of 2004, the Board and Camp Chairs agreed that attendance would be budgeted at the level of the past several camps. Unfortunately, camp registrations were significantly lower that year (the shortfall in adult full time paying registrations was 36) and Texas Camp looked like it would again experience a significant deficit.

In conversations prior to the 2005 camp between Franklin and Dena Houston and two of their close friends, John and Stephanie Files, they concluded that the camp surveys were not providing adequate information for camp planning. They agreed that, if approved by the Board, they would work together to prepare a special survey that would be administered to current and previous TIFD members. The goal was to provide more comprehensive and accurate information on what TIFD members wanted out of Texas Camp. At camp that year, the Board approved the proposal.

### **Survey Preparation**

Immediately following camp, survey preparation began. Franklin led the effort and did the computer work necessary to produce the survey. Stephanie provided the perspective of an occasional participant at Texas Camp who was able to better look at the "forest" instead of the "trees." John provided experience as an independent businessman who had prepared and conducted numerous customer surveys that were essential to developing and increasing his business. Dena provided the perspective of a long-time camp attendee and staff person and also provided to Franklin an innate sense of what made sense and what didn't, as well as the impetus to finish the project!

The survey was sent out with the Board of Trustees election ballot and the proposed Bylaws amendment in December of 2005. It was also sent at the same time to many former members of TIFD. According to Bob Madrulli and Chuck Roth, 444 surveys were sent out.

### **Survey Design**

The survey team developed questions to address what they perceived were most (if not all) of the significant issues surrounding Texas Camp. Key issues throughout were campers' concerns with the busy schedule, the teachers in any given year, the amount of live music at parties and the failure of the parties to include enough of their dance requests. Not all of the questions that were developed were included in the survey because Franklin decided that a four-page survey was verging on being too long for people to want to deal with. The result was a 25-question survey utilizing a variety of question formats in order to make it less tedious to fill out. A few questions were factual, but most were of the "select one of these" or "select all that apply" variety. Responses were counted and expressed as a percentage of all surveys received. Five questions had to be processed differently, as either a "rating" of items was requested or the intended processing of the responses involved numerical calculations. These five questions are described below.

Question #5 asked for a ranking (on a scale of 1 to 5) of reasons to attend camp. For each reason, all of the individual rankings were added and an average was obtained. Based upon the number of responses for that reason and the total number of surveys received, the average was then converted to a number on a scale of 1 to 100 to indicate overall "popularity" and allow easy comparison of the reasons.

Question #10 asked for interest in having certain types of dances taught at Texas Camp. The possible responses were effectively "yes", "no" and "no preference". Each response was converted to a numerical value so that they could be added, averaged and converted to a number on a scale of 1 to 100. Since non-responses were recorded as "no preference", no adjustment was necessary for the total number of surveys received.

Questions #12, #13 and #14, dealing with preferred countries (also regions, ethnicities or types of dance) were processed together. In #12, the number of responses for each country was tabulated and then converted to a number on a scale of 1 to 100 to indicate overall "popularity". For each country in #13 and #14, all of the individual rankings were added and an average was obtained. Based upon the number of responses for that country and the total number of surveys received, the average was converted to a number on a scale of 1 to 100 to indicate high positive preference (for #13) or high negative preference (for #14). Finally, for each country, the number in #13 was added to the number in #12 and the number in #14 was subtracted from the number in #12. The result was a ranking that factored in high positive preference and high negative preference.