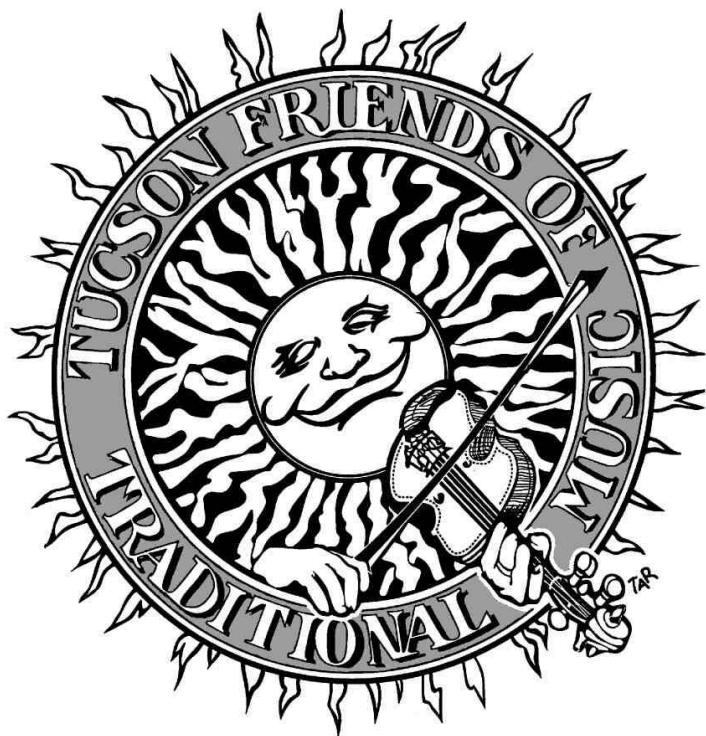




Tucson Friends of Traditional Music

July 2026 Newsletter

First Saturday Contra Dance

When: July 4th - 6:30 to 10 pm

(Doors open at 6:00 pm, Lesson 6:30 pm)

Where: Southern Arizona Dance Center, 4801 E. 29th St., Tucson ([map](#))

Featuring:

Band - [Dan Levenson and the Cat Mountain Rounders](#)

Caller - [Abbie Sorg](#)

What to Bring: Water Bottle, \$10 Admission Fee (under 25, \$5)

[Click here to volunteer!](#)

Third Saturday Contra Dance

When: July 18th - 6:30 to 10 pm

(Doors open at 6:00 pm, Lesson 6:30 pm)

Where: Southern Arizona Dance Center, 4801 E. 29th St., Tucson ([map](#))

Featuring:

Band - Kismet

Caller - [Paige Huston](#)

What to Bring: Water Bottle, \$10 Admission Fee (under 25, \$5)

[Click here to volunteer!](#)

Volunteer to help at the dance

Many hands make light work... All our dances are run by volunteers - We can't hold dances if everyone doesn't do their share. Thank you!

Visit TucsonContraDancers.org for more information about bands, dates and times.

Input Requested on TFTM Dances

We'd love to hear your ideas on how to grow and improve our dances!

We have created an anonymous feedback form to gather input and ideas on how to continue to improve our dances. All questions are optional, and the form should take, at most, 10 minutes to fill out. The form can be found [here](#).

Here's an analysis of the responses we have so far, based on the feedback questionnaire data from 8 respondents (7 dancers and 1 musician).

Key Takeaways

1. High Community Engagement with Distinct Venue Preferences

- **Dedicated Core Attendance:** The community has a strong core group of attendees.
- **Balanced Venue Preferences:** When comparing the two primary dance locations (SARDASA and Dream Dance), 3 respondents expressed no preference, while the remaining preferences were split equally (2 prefer Dream Dance, 2 prefer SARDASA).
- **Physical vs. Acoustic Trade-offs:** Dancers who prefer Dream Dance highlight its superior physical attributes, specifically mentioning the wood floor, lighting, higher ceilings, and comfortable couches. Conversely, SARDASA is favored for its superior acoustics and .
- **Floor Comfort is Crucial:** Floor quality is a significant factor for dancer comfort and retention. One less-frequent dancer noted that concrete/tiled floors are too hard on their body, while another frequent dancer expressed eager anticipation for the new wood floor.

2. Positive Word-of-Mouth and Opportunities for Outreach

- **Welcoming and Accessible Reputation:** When describing contra dancing to friends, respondents consistently emphasize that the community is highly welcoming, fun,

and accessible. Common descriptions include: "if you can walk, you can dance," "no experience or partner necessary," and "people are smiling and making eye contact."

- **Targeted Marketing Strategies:** To attract new dancers, respondents suggested focused promotional efforts, such as placing flyers at the University of Arizona (specifically targeting science and engineering departments) and local libraries.
- **Incentivizing Invitations:** Another actionable suggestion to leverage word-of-mouth growth is providing current dancers with free passes to hand out to friends, reducing the barrier to entry for newcomers.

3. Interest in Schedule Flexibility and Programming Variety

- **Generally Satisfied with Saturdays:** The current schedule (1st, 3rd, and 5th Saturday evenings) is well-received, earning four '5' ratings, one '4' rating, and two '3' ratings.
- **Desire for More Dance Opportunities:** There is an appetite for more frequent events, with one respondent explicitly stating they "would like to dance every weekend."
- **Experimenting with Alternative Times and Styles:** To accommodate busy schedules and attract different crowds, respondents suggested experimenting with weeknight or Sunday afternoon dances. Additionally, multiple respondents expressed an interest in expanding programming to include English country dancing.

More Dancers

The Saturday dances are currently losing money with the loss covered by reserves built up over the past 30 years of Dance in the Desert. We'd really like these dances to at least break even. There are two obvious ways to increase revenue: increase admission or increase attendance. Recently, our attendance has varied between about 35 and 60. Last New Year's Eve, the attendance was 77. The year before, we had 81. You can help us by coming to as many of our dances as you can and by encouraging your friends to give it a try. Remember that first time contra dancers get a free pass for their next dance. More dancers help us break even, and more dancers are more fun!

Wood Floor? Real Soon Now!

The wood floor is scheduled to be installed in SARDASA Southern Arizona Dance Center the week of July 13 or July 20. If you'd like to help with the installation, send an email to president@tucsoncontradancers.org.

Waltz Workshop August 29

Karen, our snack queen, has organized a Waltz Workshop. See the [waltz workshop page](#).

Dream Dance

We have been using Dream Dance on our fifth Saturday dances for two main reasons: wood floor and location. The wood floor is much nicer than the vinyl over concrete floor at the SARDASA Southern Arizona Dance Center. Also, the Dream Dance location is more convenient for some dancers. However, as discussed above, we will soon have a wood floor at SARDASA. Between rent and other costs, Dream Dance costs us more than twice what the SARDASA hall costs us. The Board has decided that, for the foreseeable future, we will hold our first, third, and fifth Saturday dances at the SARDASA Southern Arizona Dance Center. If you have a strong preference for one of our locations, or more ideas to grow our dances, let us know via the anonymous feedback form mentioned above!

About the Board

TFTM is managed by a volunteer board of directors elected in April of each year. The board meets the first Sunday of each month at 1:00 pm. However, the Board is taking July off, so the next meeting will be August 2. If you would like to see an agenda or participate in a meeting, send an email to president@tucsoncontradancers.org.

Besides the board, TFTM enjoys the efforts of a great group of volunteers. These volunteers include the Dance in the Desert committee and the dance volunteers (setup, teardown, registration, greeting, snacks - including Karen the "snack queen" and Carol who brings GREAT brownies).

Join SARDASA!

SARDASA is the nonprofit that owns the building where we host our dances. We (TFTM contra dancers) have contributed towards making the hall better. We supported the addition of the water dispenser and the AED, and have pledged support for the wood floor. As a member club, TFTM has one seat on the SARDASA board of directors. As an individual member, you can vote for officers and additional "at large" board members in March of each year.

TFTM members are encouraged to support SARDASA by becoming individual members. Your membership both helps support SARDASA and allows you to help guide its future through the elections. The SARDASA membership form is available [here](#). Individual membership is \$5 per year.

In addition, SARDASA is looking for a group of volunteers to help maintain the building. They would like two volunteers from each club (like TFTM) to help. The next volunteer opportunity (hall cleaning) is Friday July 10, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. If you'd like to volunteer, please email president@tucsoncontradancers.org.

TFTM Membership

New and renewing members will receive their new buttons and two free passes at the first dance they attend in 2026. Memberships are tracked using the form at

<https://forms.gle/cE7r5zCY6ts7t3dp6> . We have received a few payments where we have not yet seen an application through the form. If you have paid and do not see your membership reflected in the search at <https://tucsoncontradancers.org/tftm-membership-form-3/> , please complete the online membership application.

Phoenix Contra Events!

Phoenix Traditional Music and Dance hosts contra dances most 2nd Saturdays at Mesa Community College and 4th Fridays near downtown Phoenix. For more information go to [Phoenix Traditional Music and Dance](#) .

Health Policy:

If you are not feeling well, PLEASE stay home. We are placing our trust in our dance community to comply and keep us all safe. Masking is welcome but optional at our local dances.

More TFTM info can be found on the [Tucson Friends of Traditional Music Facebook page](#), the [TucsonContraDancers.org website](#), the [Tucson Contra Dancers Meetup page](#), our [Gatherist page](#), and on [Instagram](#) Hope to see everyone at future dances.