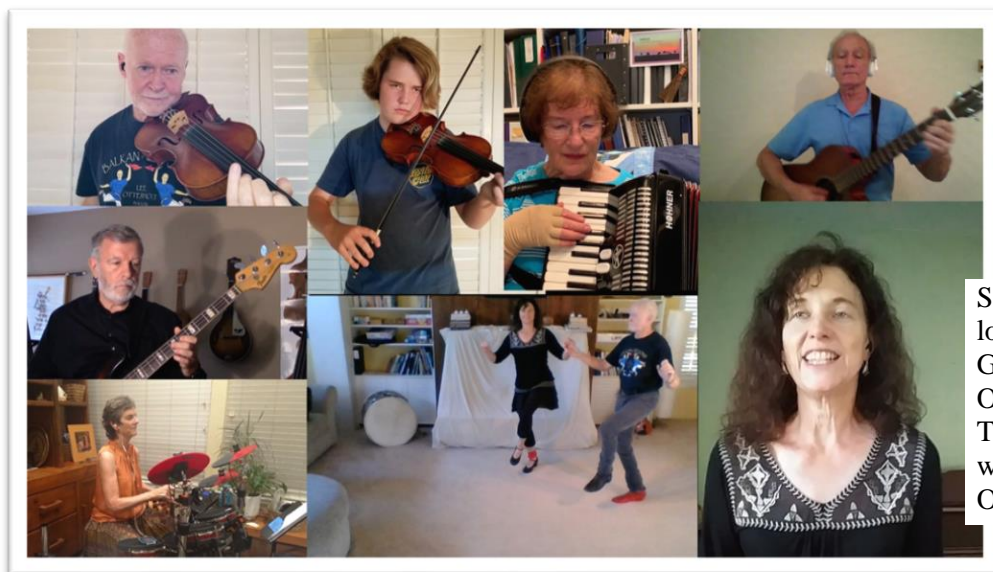
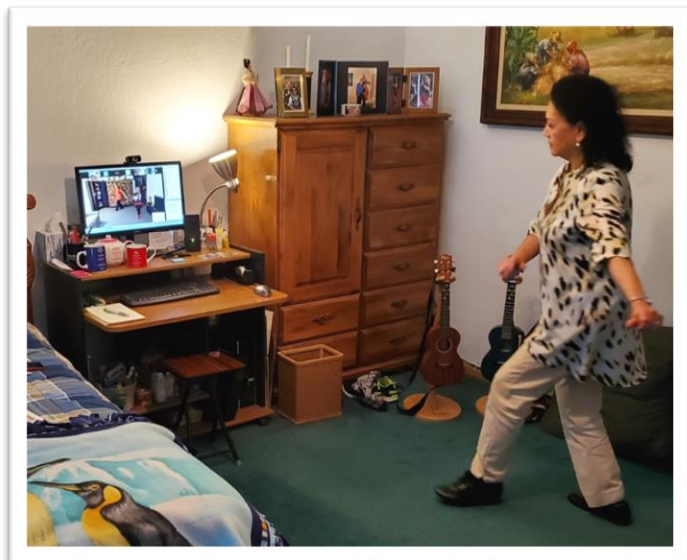


THE FAMILY PHOTO ALBUM

Kolo Festival in late November had dancers gathered around their screens. This is a selection of the photos submitted.



Sans Frontières, clockwise from lower left, Mindy Belli, Lance Gucwa, Lee Otterholt, Sebastian Otterholt, Barbara Gershman, Terry Gucwa, Marcella Lawson, with Marcella Lawson and Lee Otterholt dancing.



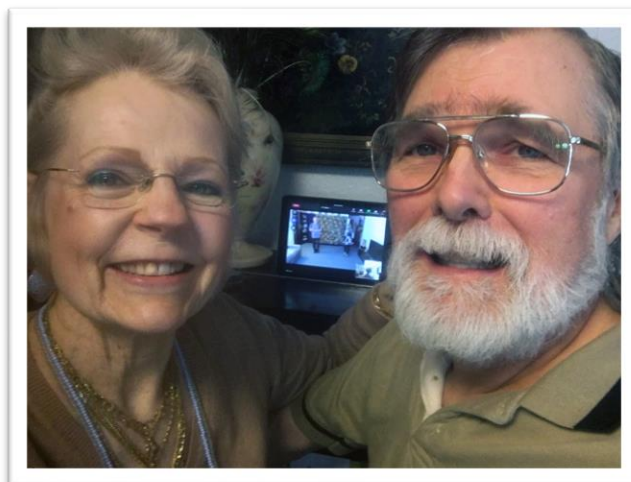
Alicia La Fetra learning Joc de Bata.



Laura Douglass and Kobal watching from atop the cabinet.



Diane Baker



Melissa Miller and Lew Smith (Cristian and Sonia on the screen in the background).

The Global Texa-Kolo Festival Extravaganza

by Karen Wilson-Bell

It was a Thanksgiving weekend like no other. The organizers for Texas International Folk Dance Camp in San Antonio and for California Kolo Festival in San Francisco, plus a hundred and more of their friends, put on an amazing event that attracted well over 1000 of us from 30 countries to a virtual celebration of dancing, music, performances, and folk culture.

There were many opportunities to learn: Joe Graziosi taught us 18 Greek dances; Sonia and Cristian taught us nine Romanian dances; Michel Hardbarger taught fun family dances; Maria Bebelekova, John Morovich, Michel Simon, and Shirley Johnson taught singing classes; Melanie Kareem taught ukulele classes; and there were at least six instrumental jam sessions. Did I mention the fantastic schedule, color coded to help us find dance classes, singing classes, instrumental classes, warm up sessions, culture corners, performances, and chat rooms?

In the evenings, there were performances for dancing by more than 24 different Balkan bands from all over the country. Simultaneously, there were videos of dance performances curated by Ahmet Lüleci and international folk dancing organized by the Texas Camp. There were after-parties every night.

The tech crew was kept busy helping us navigate between virtual dance and chat spaces, quickly playing recorded teaching sessions when a teacher's live Zoom session was having problems, and monitoring the chat window.

When we logged in on Saturday morning, we were met with the message: "Hi, Friends, we are having so much fun at Texa-Kolo that we are crashing Zoom!" The tech crew quickly made changes in the procedures for getting to the events and we kept on having fun.

It's not too late to express your thanks to the hosts or the teachers or performers for this amazing four-day event. Kolo Festival (kolofestival.org) and Texas International Folk Dance Camp (tfd.org) both have websites and opportunities to donate.

