

# The Great DanceFlurry Floor Project

*It'll feel like dancing on air*



## **Project Description:**

Dancing at its best makes you feel light as air, almost like dancing on a cloud. But this feeling requires a 'responsive' floor. Currently, most of the dance floors at the annual Flurry Festival consist of tile on concrete, hardly a resilient surface.

For many years, Flurry dancers have asked us to improve the quality of the dance floors at the festival. To respond to this request, the DanceFlurry Organization (DFO) has initiated the Great DanceFlurry Floor Project. *(The DFO is the non-profit organization that sponsors the festival, as distinct from the Flurry committee that actually runs the event.)*

Installing 'responsive' sprung flooring on top of concrete floors will significantly improve the quality of the dance experience (putting more bounce in dancers' steps) and reduce the risk of injury to dancers' feet, knees, hips and backs.

We have been working with professional dance floor designer Andrew Pate. He has designed a 'springy' and portable dance floor system for the Flurry Festival.

**Project Goal:** Our goal is to install a full set of floor panels on the dance floor in the large contra hall (Room D) at the Saratoga City Center within 5 years. Of course, if fundraising goes well, the goal could be achieved within a few years.

**Fundraising Kickoff:** Our fundraising campaign for the Great DanceFlurry Floor Project starts in February 2012. The fundraising goal is to raise \$60,000 to cover the cost of purchasing and maintaining floor panels for Room D. As our fundraising timeline is 3-5 years, don't expect the floor to appear in Room D next year.

**Our First Milestone:** We're aiming to quickly raise \$5,000 to purchase enough panels to test the prototype design in small dance spaces in the Capital District. What we learn from these 'test' panels will allow us to fine-tune the remaining panels.

**Donations Towards the Purchase of Floor Panels:**  
\$200 buys one panel, \$100 - 1/2 panel, \$50 - 1/4 panel, \$25 - 1/8 panel. It will take 304 panels to cover the whole floor.

**Donor Acknowledgement:** the Great DanceFlurry Floor Honor Board in Room D will recognize donors who have helped make the sprung floor dream come true. For a donation of \$50 or more, we will place your name, your family name or the name of a special person you wish to honor on the board.

**Inquiries:** Direct all inquiries to:  
Don Bell  
Vice-President, DanceFlurry Organization  
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Spread the word to your dancer friends.  
Find out how you can make this uplifting project possible at:

**[www.danceflurry.org/greatdancefloor](http://www.danceflurry.org/greatdancefloor)**

LET'S GET THE GREAT DANCEFLURRY FLOOR PROJECT  
OFF THE GROUND!

# The Northwest Folklife Festival Roadhouse Dance Floor Project in Seattle, Washington (an inspiration for the Great DanceFlurry Floor Project)

## [Communities in Focus: FolkFloor Volunteers](http://www.nwfolklife.org/cultural-focus/communities-in-focus-folkfloor-volunteers/)

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Posted on [May 10, 2010](#) by [Erin Doherty](#) - Long-time volunteer and Northwest Folklife Board Member Luther Black gives us some behind-the-scenes background on the folks responsible for the dance floor at the Roadhouse.



Dancers at the Roadhouse; ©Erika Schultz/Seattle Times

### **Who is your community? What can audiences at the Festival expect to experience at your showcase?**

We call ourselves the FolkFloor Volunteers; we are Folklife volunteers/supporters who enjoy dancing in the Roadhouse every NWFL Festival weekend and throughout the year around our region. Every year anywhere from 70 to 130 volunteers work in shifts from Wednesday evening before to Tuesday evening after the Festival weekend. We assemble, tape, clean, wax and buff the 56' X 96' dance floor for four days of Roadhouse dancing. Then after the Festival we carefully take it apart, paint a portion of it, and return it to storage until the next year.

Festival attendees are invited to come to the Roadhouse to see our large gray cushioned floor, and to join us dancing to the inspiring dance bands for contras, squares, swing, Cajun, blues, and more. On Thursday (all day), or Monday night after 9 PM, all can join us as we assemble and strike, respectively, the FolkFloor at this year's NW Folklife Festival.

### **How long has your community been involved with Northwest Folklife? How did you first get involved?**

In 1987, an original core of concerned dancers and musicians raised the money, decided on a workable design, and installed the first FolkFloor in the old Flag Pavilion West, with the encouragement of the Executive Director and Production Director of the Festival. During the next three Festivals we made a few modifications to reduce wear and correct dust problems that arose. Since then, year after year, volunteers have returned to work on the FolkFloor, encouraging all to join in the community effort to make the Roadhouse an attractive, danceable venue.

### **How are younger or newer folks getting involved?**

Each spring, as the FolkFloor volunteers start to discuss logistical plans for the Festival, we ask everyone to invite local dancers to join in the unique effort to produce a comfortable and quality dance experience at the Roadhouse.

This spring we are reaching out through word of mouth and via social networking (e.g., [Facebook](#)) to get new faces involved with process of turning the Fisher Pavilion into the Roadhouse as we build out the Folkfloor.

### **Three things you'd like people to know about your community and your cultural traditions and arts:**

- a. The FolkFloor came directly from the grassroots: its concept, design and execution were community-driven.
- b. Although several of the original volunteers no longer dance the entire weekend, they remain committed to the project and continue to devote hours of labor for the benefit of the entire community.
- c. Dancing of the sort seen on the FolkFloor is a living and growing tradition. We encourage current dancers and musicians to accept an active role in furthering the historic success of the FolkFloor.