

THE SOUNDPOST

The Official Publication

JULY-AUGUST 2017 of the
California State Old-Time Fiddlers' Association

Visit our new web site at www.csotfa.org

"Preserving and Perpetuating Old Time Fiddle Music"

Presidents Message

Does anyone find it ironic that as President of the CSOTFA I don't play the fiddle? Ever since the first fiddle contest that I attended with Tex, when asked what I play, I have flippantly said that while Tex plays bass, I play golf. That usually stops conversation for a bit while people try to figure out exactly what kind of instrument that is. I also feel that I should disclose that at my very first fiddle contest-- the 1986 Western Open-- my favorite part was the barbershop quartet that performed "Royal Garden Blues". And, further I must admit that I was completely horrified and overwhelmed by the cacophony in the warm up room.

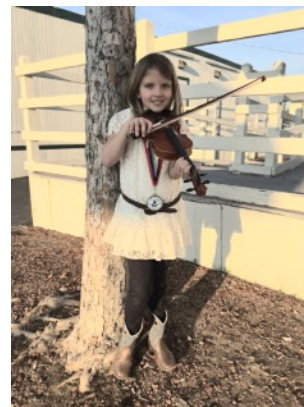
After a year or two and a few more fiddle contests, I was truly beginning to enjoy and appreciate the music, but I was feeling pretty stupid because I didn't seem to recognize very many tunes. I started keeping track of competition tunes and over the past 30 years, found out that only 25% of the tunes at any contest are played more than once. That made me feel a little less stupid, but, I must confess that I still can't name many tunes that I hear, and mostly can't hum the tune when given the title.

So, except for the fact that I fell in love with a bass player some 31 years ago, why do I love this music and love this organization so much that I choose to spend my time and energy in the administration of the CSOTFA and, along with that aforementioned bass player, have chaired the Western Open Fiddle Championships for the past 21 years? Maybe it's a hard question, but there's a simple answer. I am drawn to the people who are drawn to this music. I love that each of you brings a unique perspective, history, and level of musical skill and knowledge, and that diversity is what makes us such a wonderful organization.

I think that occasionally we get caught up and focus on our differences instead of celebrating them. We should remember to use our love of this music as a reason to come together and share stories, and history, and, oh yes, the music! I hope you find the opportunity to go to as many fiddle events as you can. Being around our Fiddle Family has brought great joy into my life and I would hope that each of you find that joy as well.

Sharon

CSOTFA District 3 7th Annual Amateur Fiddle Contest



Eight year old Gusty Chandler practices her fiddle tunes as she awaits her turn on the contest stage. Chandler earned 5th place in the Pee Wee Division at her very first fiddle contest!"

Photo by Stacey Snodgrass

District 5 Weiser, Idaho



District 5 teacher Eric Anderson and students along with accompanist Jim French, participated in the Certified Jr.Jr. and Small Fry Showcase at the National Fiddle Championships. in Weiser Idaho.

Photo by Lyle Dixon

California State Old Time Fiddlers' Association

P.O. Box 1703 Oroville, CA 95965

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District 9: Ruth Oveland -- roveland@sbcglobal.net
District 10: Mike Drayton – mdrayton@sonic.net

DISTRICT MEETING LOCATIONS, DATES, AND TIMES:

District 1 4th Sunday 1:00-5:00 p.m.: Feather River Senior Center 1335 Meyer St. Oroville

District 3 21100 Lonely Lane, Tehachapi Ca 2nd Saturday 2:00-5:00 p.m

District 4 1st Sunday 1:00-4:00 p.m.: Orange Thorpe Pk. Activity Bldg., 1414 Brookhurst Fullerton CA

District 5 2nd Sunday 1:00-5:00 p.m.: Orangevale Grange, 5807 Walnut Ave. Orangevale CA

District 6 1st Sunday 1:00—4:30pm: St. James Lutheran Church 2500 Shasta View Dr. Redding CA
2nd Saturday 5:50p—7:30pm: Round Table Pizza, Shasta Mall, 900 Dana Dr., Redding, CA
4th Sunday 1:00p—3:00pm: Millville Grange Hall, 2023 Old Forty-four Dr., Palo Cedro, CA

District 7 2nd Sunday: Terrace Estates Clubhouse, 1815 Sweetwater Road, Spring Valley, CA
3rd Sunday: Village Park Rec Club #2, 2099 Mountain Vista Dr., Encinitas, CA 92024
4th Sunday: Rancho San Diego Library, 11555 Via Rancho San Diego, El Cajon, CA

District 8 2nd & 4th Sunday 1:30-4:00 p.m.: Oak View Community Center, 18 Valley Rd. Oak View CA

District 9 4th Sunday 1:30-5:00 p.m.: United Methodist Church, 19806 Wisteria St., Castro Valley CA

District 10 Redwood Café, Cotati 4th Sun.+ traveling jam: call Mark Hogan 707-829-8012 or Katy Bridges 415-331-9661

District Reports

District 1 Mary Rose Preston

District 1 continues to have its Fiddle Workshops the first and third Mondays from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the Bolt's Antique Tool Museum, 1650 Broderick Street, Oroville. Led by Jimi Beeler, the workshops continue to give musicians the needed instruction and encouragement to perform for a crowd. The first hour is spent playing through new tunes and reviewing familiar ones at a slow to moderate tempo, then we take a short break. The second hour we go around the circle and each person chooses a tune to lead. Great fun!

The Board is planning another year's worth of performances for various parades and events. Our fourth Sunday 2:00 jam sessions vary in size, but are eagerly looked forward to by our members and visitors. Those Sundays normally start at around 1:00 with an hour or so of country/western music, with singing and guitar playing. There are always tasty treats to snack on, plus a raffle at 3:30, followed by small groups who sign up to perform. The jams are held at the Feather River Senior Center, 1335 Myers Street, Oroville. If you are passing through, be sure to stop by and visit; we would love to have you.

We are starting to work on next year's fiddle contest, so if there is something you think we should pay attention to, please let us know.

District 3 Gayel Pitchford



"Mitchel and Lorelai Kline of LeMoore, CA, show off the medals they earned, 3rd and 4th places respectively, in the Picking Division at the 7th annual Amateur Contest in Tehachapi." This was their very first time entering a picking division! Photo by Stacey Snodgrass.

The California State Old Time Fiddlers 7th Annual Amateur Fiddle Contest was held on Sat., March 11, and drew a huge crowd of listeners and twice as many fiddlers as ever before! Tehachapi's own fiddlers had great success with their playing. THS Sophomore Joe Wallek won the Grand Champion Playoff trophy. Other winners were as follows:

PeeWee Division (ages 8 and under)

1st Place- Ethan Yang, Tehachapi

2nd Place - Emilia Martin , Tehachapi

3rd Place- Maria Laskey, Boron

4th Place- Sage Sparks, Hanford

5th Place- Gusty Chandler, Tehachapi

Junior-Junior Division (ages 9 – 12)

1st Place—Nathan Crotty Coarsegold

2nd Place-Elsa Crotty, Coarsegold

3rd Place- BJ Zheng, Tehachapi

4th Place- Madisyn Allen, Hanford

5th Place- Abby Doyle, LeMoore

Junior Division (ages 13-19)

1st Place - Joe Wallek, Tehachapi

2nd Place- Abigail Halsey, Hanford

3rd Place- Emily Hamilton, Tehachapi

4th Place - Frank Sponsler, Tehachapi

5th Place Katie Jones, Tehachapi

Picking Division (all ages):

1st Place—Joe Wallek, Tehachapi

2nd Place- BJ Zheng, Tehachapi

3rd Place - Mitchel Kline, LeMoore

4th Place - Lorelai Kline, LeMoore

5th Place - Grace Doyle, LeMoore

Cello/Bass Division

1st Place - Piper Meisler, Tehachapi

2nd Place - Rebecca Carol, Tehachapi

3rd Place - Natalie Whiteside, Tehachapi

Twin Fiddle Division

1st Place - Joe Wallek & Abigail Halsey

2nd Place- Emily & Everett Hamilton

3rd Place - Lorelai & Mitchell Kline.

Novelty Division (Any instrument not a fiddle or picking instrument)

- 1st Place - BJ Zheng, piano, Tehachapi
- 2nd Place - Joe Wallek, piano, Tehachapi
- 3rd Place - Penn Whiteside, viola, Tehachapi
- 4th Place - Katie Jones, viola, Tehachapi
- 5th Place - Piper Meisler, viola, Tehachapi

District 4

Pat Nelson

District 4 had our now-annual summer BBQ in June. We had lots of good music to accompany our potluck. District 4 loves to share food and fun!



In Memory Of Howdy Forrester

CALIFORNIA STATE OLD TIME FIDDLERS ASSOCIATION
DISTRICT #3 "FIDDLIN' DOWN THE TRACKS"

PRESENTS
41ST ANNUAL
Fiddle Contest
SEPTEMBER 15TH & 16TH
COUNTRY OAKS BAPTIST CHURCH
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15 TH @ 3:00PM	16 TH @ 8:00AM
-Senior Division-	-Twin Fiddles-
-Senior-Senior Division-	-Picking Division-
-Adult Band-	-Novelty Divisions-
-Scramble-	-Jr. Band Scramble-
	-Age Divisions-

WINNERS GET A CASH PRIZE, TROPHY OR MEDAL
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District 5

Lyle Dixon



The Weiser Fiddle Contest (Weiser, Idaho) saw a few folks from district 5 and district 5 fiddle teacher Eric Anderson students join in the competition. Eric Anderson - Adult Division (Round 3, Top 8), Ben Cleland competed in the Junior Division, Leah Bowen - Jr Jr Division, and Eric Malme's two son's Kylan and Koll along with Eric Anderson's son Owen, all competed in the Small Fry Division. No matter how fiddlers placed in the competition the main fun of Weiser is the once a year change to meet old friends, make new friends and to sit around the camp site and jam with other fiddlers from around the county, the world in reality. There was a fiddler from Japan where Old Time Fiddle music is quite the thing.

Our district continues planning for the Sunday, September 10th Fiddle Kids Showcase. The event (weather permitting) will be held outdoors on the grounds of the Orangevale Grange Hall grounds. Each of our young fiddlers will perform as groups as well as individually. We'll also have our Full Stage Assemblies where fiddlers and musicians of all ages will perform together and in round-robin jams. Admission is free. Hamburgers and Hot Dogs will be for sale. And of course donations are gladly accepted.



District 7

Gregory Gross



District 7 is already planning on its fifth annual Julian Fiddle 'n' Pickin' Contest, currently projected for late spring in 2018. This contest revives a tradition previously carried by the Julian Lions Club. People come to compete from all over the West, and spectators are invited to observe all day long for free.

Elsewhere, District 7 has made a stage appearance for Bluegrass Day at the San Diego County Fair, invited by the San Diego Bluegrass Society and the North County Bluegrass & Folk Club. Participants included Bruce Barnes, Dale Desmuke, Gregory Gross and Willie Randel. Jim Blakemore made a guest appearance on our set.

We have been contacted by the San Diego Unified School District to assist in the Fiddling in the Schools program (Kid Fiddle Fest'), set up for fast-paced instruction to kid fiddlers from grade- through high-school level in the San Diego area. Special thanks to local members Steve & Stephanie Millican for coordinating between the School District and our club. This course runs through six workshops, and puts all of the students on stage for an exciting showcase. We are gathering a high degree of repeat participants each year.

District 7 members have been keeping involved with recent contests: Willie Randel placed third in the Senior Senior category of CSOTFA's Oroville contest, and rated as the oldest fiddler competing. Willie accepted an invitation to judge at death valley in November. He also plans to compete at the upcoming Red Bluff contest. Jon Michael Brooks made first place in Open/Adult Twin Fiddle at the State contest, opposite Cara Bunnell.

Local members at the Weiser (national) contest include Shira Ellisman from Encinitas (Twin Fiddling, 3rd with Karissa Nugent) and Alex Sharps from Julian (Young Adult, 6th).

In the Julian contest, several local members took honors. Nathaniel Copeland (junior, 3rd), and Jasper Morgall (junior, 4th). Shira Ellisman and Alex Sharps placed 1st & 2nd, respectively in the open category, also placing 1st & 5th in the backup category. Alex also placed 2nd in the picking section. Barbara Brooks took 1st, and Willie Randel scored 4th in the Senior Senior group.

Of course, the rest of the Julian contest results can be viewed online at <http://www.sandiegofiddler.org/2017contestresults.html>.

District 9

Tom Clausen

Greetings fellow CSOTFA musicians and supporters! District Nine continues to celebrate our musical traditions every fourth Sunday and welcomes all to join us for an afternoon of festive merriment, a terrific potluck, and convivial musical reveries. I have of late been playing on occasion with a string quartet and working to remember what it's like to play from the paper.

I invited my notation-reading friends to join me for a jam session and watched as they struggled to understand our old-time A-A, B-B eight bars repeated pattern. They had become so accustomed to reading the "fly-specks" that even when playing familiar tunes if they had no staff before them they became lost. And they had looks of despair when I raised the idea that they learn a tune simply by listening.

Learning by ear is something that one can become better at, but what concerned me was that my friends did not think the effort even worth it. I did not really know how to respond or convince my fellow musicians that playing a traditional tune over and over can be interesting and musically engaging until I read a comment by the great Vladimir Horowitz who believed that "There is an objective intellectual component to music insofar as its formal structure is concerned, but when it comes to performance, what is required is not interpretation but a process of subjective re-creation... the notation is a mere skeleton the performer endows with flesh and blood so that the music comes to life and speaks."

And while none of us are able to imagine or understand the kind of re-creations to which Horowitz was referring, we can all work to make our strivings more authentic and musical and compelling to our audience and ourselves. Such efforts as these can, I believe, raise our music to higher levels while connecting us to earlier musical traditions which existed almost completely without notation. In this way the music can become more authentic, more traditional.

At jams we often play the same tune over and over for many, many repetitions - until everyone is satisfied that the tune has served it's purpose and is ready to conclude. And while I'm not sure that every repetition is always totally necessary, each one can be real music and can convey the sense of the tune, it's nature, and the total effect of musicality. This is sometimes called "the groove" and under the right circumstances can be palpable to the participants and the audience.

Please come and join us at the United Methodist Church in Castro Valley. We meet on the fourth Sunday. Our membership appreciates the California Old Time Fiddlers Association and recognizes the contributions of the many volunteers it takes to keep this terrific organization strong and looking forward.

District 10

Mike Drayton

District 10—Lake, Mendocino and Sonoma Counties

Coming up: District 10's Fiddle-Off at the Heirloom Festival, Thursday, September 7th, 2-5 p.m. at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds in Santa Rosa. \$1,000 in total prize money. This gathering follows different rules than the usual contest, being based on the ability to play a large number of well-known tunes more than on technical skill. Take a look at the details, linked from our web page: <http://csotfa10.org>

District 10 has recently made a donation from its scholarship fund to the Walker Creek Music Camp (Sept. 28-Oct.1). While our gift was unrestricted, the camp director has let us know that the funds will be applied toward the "Music and More" program, designed for children from 4 to 10 years.

In June, a group of volunteer musicians from District 10 performed for an assembly at a Lake County elementary school, another opportunity to spread old time fiddling to younger folks.

Also in Lake County, a monthly jam is open to the public at the Ely Stage Stop, a nonprofit living history center in Kelseyville. It happens on the 1st Sunday of the month from noon till 2:00. Some come to play; others to listen. Donations continue to be generous, supporting the District's scholarship fund.

California State Old Time Fiddlers Association
District 10
and The National Heirloom Exposition
Presents
A different kind of fiddle contest
(How broad is your repertoire?)

\$1000 Fiddle-Off!

- Over \$1000 in cash prizes, plus merchandise!
- \$400 First prize in Adult Division, plus a new fiddle valued at \$1000!
- \$125 First prize in Youth Division
- Free admission for contestants!
- No entry fee!
- Every contestant will receive a cash or merchandise prize!
- Youth (17+under) and Adult divisions!



The fiddle-off is run like a spelling bee: All contestants stand on stage and take turns drawing the name of a tune out of a container. If the contestant can play it recognizably, he or she remains in the competition. If the contestant fails to play the tune he or she is out of the competition with a consolation prize.

All the tunes that might be drawn have been published ahead of time on the website of District 10 (csotfa10.org). Rules and other information are also on the website and the website of the Expo (theheirloomexpo.com)

At the National Heirloom Exposition

Thursday, September 7, 2017

2:00-5:00

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History of Gospel Music

Old Time, Bluegrass and Gospel Music go together like Hoe-Down, Waltz and Tune of Choice. Gospel Music has had a huge influence on old time music, country and bluegrass music, as well as other music genres

The creation, performance, significance, and even the definition of gospel music varies according to culture and social context. Gospel music is composed and performed for many purposes, including aesthetic pleasure, religious or ceremonial purposes, and as entertainment . Gospel music usually has dominant vocals and harmony, with Christian lyrics. Gospel music can be traced to the early 17th century, with roots in the black oral tradition. Hymns and sacred songs were repeated in a call and response fashion. Most of the churches relied on hand clapping and foot stomping as rhythmic accompaniment. Most of the singing was done a cappella. Perhaps the most famous gospel-based hymns were composed in the 1760s-1770s by English writers John Newton ("Amazing Grace") and Augustus Toplady ("Rock of Ages"), members of the Anglican Church. Starting out as lyrics only, it took decades for standardized tunes to be added to them.

The first published use of the term "Gospel Song" probably appeared in 1874 when Philip Bliss released a songbook entitled Gospel Songs. A Choice Collection of Hymns and Tunes. It was used to describe a new style of church music, songs that were easy to grasp and more easily singable than the traditional church hymns, which came out of the mass revival movement starting with Dwight L. Moody.

The advent of radio in the 1920s greatly increased the audience for gospel music. Following World War II, gospel music moved into major auditoriums, and gospel music concerts became quite elaborate.

Bluegrass gospel music is rooted in American mountain music .Bluegrass Gospel music is simply Southern Gospel music performed by a bluegrass band, sometimes with bluegrass arrangements. Early bands such as those of Bill Monroe and the Stanley Brothers often set aside their banjos and fiddles to sing Southern Gospel quartet arrangements of both traditional and original songs. Later, Gospel singing was incorporated into normal bluegrass arrangements.

Gospel blues is a blues-based form of gospel music (a combination of blues guitar and evangelistic lyrics). Southern gospel used all male, tenor-lead-baritone-bass quartet make-up. Progressive Southern gospel is an American music genre that has grown out of Southern gospel over the past couple of decades. Christian country music, sometimes referred to as country gospel music, is a subgenre of gospel music with a country flair.

Sources: New World Encyclopedia, Wikipedia

It has been around for generations. It originated as a blend of early mountain music, cowboy music and the music from the plantations of the Deep South. It was out of this blend of music that Southern Gospel music was birthed and was found primarily in the southern states.

Today, Christian country music has blended with a new brand of music called Positive Christian Country music. In the mid-1990s, Christian country hit its highest popularity. So much so that mainstream artists like Larry Gatlin, Charlie Daniels and Barbara Mandrell, just to name a few, began recording music that had this positive Christian country flair.

Many secular country music artists have recorded country gospel songs or have performed them on their radio and television programs. From 1956-1960, two network shows usually concluded with a gospel number, which was popular with viewers: The Tennessee Ernie Ford Show and Red Foley's Ozark Jubilee.

Other shows like Hee Haw, the Barbara Mandrell and the Mandrell Sisters Show, and the Statler Brothers implemented the same programming style. For instance, Hee Haw featured a gospel song at the end of each of its shows; series stars Roy Clark, Buck Owens, Grandpa Jones and Kenny Price would sing either a traditional hymn or a newer one well known by mainstream country and Christian country audiences, and the segment itself served as a balance to the show's loony, corn-style humor.

The Grand Ole Opry, the longest running radio show and one of the most popular country music shows, has always included gospel music as a part of its program.

Some of the most popular recording artists of the twentieth century, most notably Elvis Presley, also recorded gospel music out of admiration for the music and as an expression of personal faith. In the past, most Christian country music was recorded by groups with southern gospel flair like the Oak Ridge Boys, Red Sovine, The Louvin Brothers and The Carter Family. Eventually, more mainstream country artists—ranging from Loretta Lynn and Dolly Parton to Alabama and Alan Jackson—recorded gospel albums while continuing to record secular music. Johnny Cash, a devout Christian despite living a troubled life, recorded several best-selling gospel albums and always included a Christian song in his concerts.

By its very definition, the term gospel means 'good news.' Gospel music is one of the vehicles through which the ideals of Christianity have been spread to audiences all over the world.



July-August 2017

California State Old-Time Fiddlers' Association

Sept. 7, 2017

\$1000 Fiddle Off- National Heirloom Exposition, Sonoma County Fairgrounds, Santa Rosa, CA

See www.csotfa10.org

Sept.15-16

**41st Annual "Fiddlin Down the Tracks", Tehachapi CA.
See www.tehachapifiddlers.org**

Oct.. 19-21

35th Annual Western Open Fiddle Championships, Red Bluff, CA See www.westernopenfiddle.com

Nov 7-11, 2017

**Death Valley 49'ers Encampment, with the Grassy Green Picking and Fiddle contest scheduled for Saturday,
Nov.11th. See www.deathvalley49ers.org**

