



Visit our new web site at www.csotfa.org

"Preserving and Perpetuating Old Time Fiddle Music"

Presidents Message

My first message to all of you members of CSOTFA is that your organization is doing well and is in good hands. Your District Directors and State Officers met in Sacramento on August 25-26, and discussed many things, making several decisions concerning the 2018 CSOTFA Fiddle Championships. Obviously, more information will be forthcoming as we get closer to the event, but primarily we want you to put March 23-24, 2018 on your calendars. We moved the contest a week later so as to allow for our musicians to perform at many St. Patrick's Day gigs all up and down the state.

Tex and I are immersed in Western Open fundraising and preparations for our 35th contest. Please check out the information on that elsewhere in this publication. Of course we hope you all can attend, but even more important than that, we hope that you will avail yourselves of the opportunities close to your home to support old time fiddle music--whatever the venue.

Finally, I can't help but think about the many, many people across our country who are suffering from hurricanes, floods, and horrible wildfires. Our hearts are broken for their losses and our prayers are with the survivors as they rebuild.

Sharon

CSOTFA State Membership Report

As of August 1 2017

Head of Households - 586

Spouses/Partners - 235

Children - 89

Total membership - 910

State Board of Directors Meeting

Your State Board of Directors met in Sacramento on August 26. Topics of discussion included a review of the 2017 State Contest, corrections to the revised by-laws, increase pay for contest judges to cover their expenses including lodging. New business topics for discussion were Weiser certification, review of contest rules and procedures. Lyle Dixon was nominated for the Huffman Service Award which is given out at the March Contest. Ruth Oveland, Chuck Murtomaki and Tex Ash were appointed as the nominating committee for 2018 officers.,

The board voted to increase the prize money for the Open Division to a total of \$1600 and voted to make the contest Weiser Certified. The topic of dues increase was tabled till the March meeting. Each District Director presented a report on what their district is doing.



Seated left to right, Tex Ash, Mike Drayton, Ruth Oveland, Zeke Walker, Gayel Pitchford. Standing, Bob Curtis, Mary Rose Preston, Sharon Barrett, Chuck Murtomaki, Cathy Agnew, Bill Whitfield, Marlene Nord, Lyle Dixon. Not Pictured Charley Oveland.

California State Old Time Fiddlers' Association

P.O. Box 1703 Oroville, CA 95965

State Officers

President: Sharon Barrett- texshar@pacbell.net
V. Pres. : Bill Whitfield - anita.marley49@gmail.com
Secretary: Mary Rose Preston; maryrose@wavecable.com
Treasurer: Robert Curtis - rocurtis@gatewayacceptance.com
Membership: Charley Oveland - croveland@sbcglobal.net
Editor: Cathy Agnew - themimi@roadrunner.com

State Directors

District 1: Vacant
District 3: Gayel Pitchford -- captgayel@cybersurfers.net
District 4: Pat Nelson -- rpnelson@pacbell.net
District 5: Lyle Dixson - Lyle@DATEQ.NET
District 6: Tex Ash -- texshar@pacbell.net
District 7: Chuck Murtomaki - chmurt@cox.net
District 8: Charletta Erb – charlettaerb@gmail.com
District 9: Ruth Oveland -- roveland@sbcglobal.net
District 10: Mike Drayton – mdayton@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 2nd Saturday 2:00-5:00 p.m. 21100 Lonely Lane, Tehachapi Ca

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 PM - 4:30 PM Redding - St. James Lutheran Church 2500 Shasta View Blvd.
Redding, CA - Web site: <http://www.northstatefiddlers.com>

3rd Sunday - Palo Cedro- 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM.- 22037 Old Forty-Four Drive, 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 4th Sun.+ traveling jam: Redwood Café, Cotati call Mark Hogan 707-829-8012 or
Katy Bridges 415-331-9661

District Reports

District 1

Mary Rose Preston

The Fiddle Workshop folks played on the wonderful District 1 float during the annual Palermo Community Parade and Festival on Saturday, September 16. The weather was beautiful - in the 70's - and a fun time was had by all. Even the waiting time before the parade was enjoyable - watching other groups show up and assemble their floats, practicing tunes with our buddies, joking and laughing, listening to Rayburn's wonderful country music songs and then the brisk ride back after the parade was over - hold on to your hats! No seat belts here!

The same group plans to play patriotic music on the float for the Veterans Day Parade on Saturday, November 11 at 11:00 a.m. in Historic Downtown Oroville, and is looking forward to the Parade of Lights in the evening on Saturday, December 9. We still have room for a few more musicians on the float, and we could also use some Smilers and Wavers.

District 1 continues 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. The workshops are led by talented performer and teacher Jimi Beeler. (no workshops November or December)

A regular group of fine District 1 musicians performs the first Sunday evening every month at Country Crest, a senior living facility in Oroville. Our fourth Sunday 2:00 jams are appreciated by our members and visitors. Bring a potluck dish and join the fun! Buy some tickets for the raffle at 3:30, and stay to enjoy the small groups who sign up to perform after the raffle. The board meetings and jams are at the Feather River Senior Center, 1335 Myers Street, Oroville. If you are passing through town, be sure to stop by and visit; we would love to see 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.



Waiting for the parade to start



Karen & Sadie

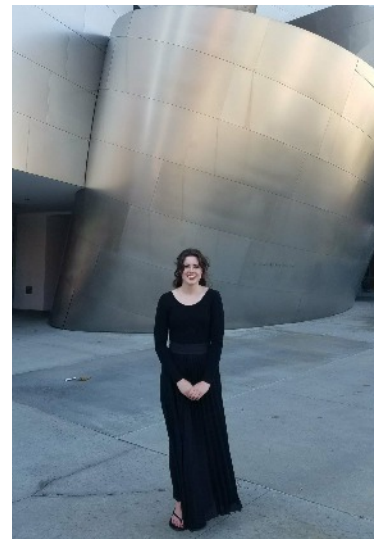
District 3

Gayel Pitchford



Violin fiddlers are Joy Robb and Gayel Pitchford; Cello fiddler is Rebecca Carol; and Guitarist is Ron Blair. We were all practicing our tunes for our Fiddlin' Down the Tracks contest.

PIPER MEISLER ATTENDS CHAMBER MUSIC INTENSIVE



Cellist Piper Meisler, at the Disney Hall in Los Angeles, home of the LA Philharmonic. Picture by Kim Millovich.

Tehachapi High School senior Piper Meisler just returned from the prestigious two-week Chamber Music Intensive Camp at Idyllwild, where she and the Festival Orchestra rehearsed and played six concerts in two weeks! Playing started at eight in the morning and did not end until ten o'clock at night.

There were 100 high school musicians in the Festival Orchestra, from all over the United States and foreign countries like Germany, China and Taiwan, as well.

Admission was by audition only, and the standards were very rigorous: two pieces of your choice, one of which had to show technical prowess and the other had to show artistic elegance.

In addition, the students were required to play three 3-octave scales, one of which had to be in a minor key. Only twelve cellos were chosen to participate in the program.

Piper played in a quartet of two violins, a bass and a cello; they performed a piece by Rossini. The crowning achievement of the camp was the final concert, which was played at Disney Hall in Los Angeles, home of the LA Philharmonic. In fact, if you closed your eyes during the concert, you would have thought you were listening to the LA Phil, as the level of playing was amazing.

Piper started her musical career playing Cello in the Carden School Orchestra. After a year or so, she decided she was really dedicated to playing the Cello for her vocation, and she began private Cello lessons. She has studied for the past seven years with Gayel Pitchford. She is the Principal Cellist in the Tehachapi Strings Orchestra and plays in the Tehachapi Symphony, as well. She is a championship Cello fiddler and has shelves full of trophies she has won for her prowess.

She plans to attend music conservatory and wants to become a Cellist in a major orchestra like the Los Angeles Philharmonic. While this may seem like a lofty goal for a “girl from little ole Tehachapi,” getting into the Chamber Intensive was a big first step in that direction. Getting into a good conservatory will be the next step. One day we may have to buy a \$100 ticket to see Piper playing in the LA Phil!



Tehachapi String Orchestra opened for the Fiddlin' Down the Tracks Contest on Sept. 15.

District 4

Pat Nelson

District 4 had a good turnout over for our jam over Labor Day weekend. Our small number sounded like double the fiddles! District 4 is looking forward to our holiday dinner and jam on Sunday, December 10. Note that this event is the second Sunday instead of the first. Holiday invitation will be coming next month. Fiddle on!

District 6

George Fredson

It still feels a lot like summer, but fall is around the corner! There is a new seasonal poster for our regularly occurring jams which you can see below or on our website at www.northstatefiddlers.com.

The next big event for District 6 is the **Western Open Fiddle Championships** coming up in October. We think of the **Western Open** as the competition “arm” of District 6 of the California State Old Time Fiddlers Association. It was born in the spring of 1982 in Redding. Jacque Waterhouse, Maria and Frank Hawkey, Ron Heuer, and Mary Lane can take credit for having the courage and enthusiasm to get started and create what is now one of the largest and most popular fiddle contests in the Western United States. After 14 very successful years in Redding, the **Western Open** moved to our home here in Red Bluff. In 2016, we celebrated our 20th year in Red Bluff with the **34th Annual Western Open Fiddle Championships**.

The **Western Open** has provided motivation and a showcase for hundreds of youngsters of all ages who practice all year for this event. Old friends and new get together this week and everyone revels in the wholesome family atmosphere. The toe-tapping music resonates from every nook and cranny of the Red Bluff Elks Lodge, and “fiddling around” during *Fiddle Week* has become an October tradition in Tehama County. The old-time tunes, passed down through the years, are heard once again.

Every year we work to make improvements and add new ideas and new events. Three years ago we started a Junior Piano Contest on Saturday morning for our young pianists, ages 17 and under. This year we are changing our Thursday night program to an **Old Time Gospel Jam**. We are encouraging musicians and lovers of this old time gospel music to come play any acoustic instrument and we invite everyone to sing along with the old standards. Festivities will begin with the Elks Lodge offering dinner for a nominal charge, followed by the **Old Time Gospel Jam** beginning at 6:30 PM, with free admittance to all. The Western Open Fiddle Championships competition will begin Friday morning and run until dinner. After dinner, we will award prizes and then feature our guest performer in concert, **Byron Berline**, all the way from Guthrie, Oklahoma. The **Western Open** will continue competitions all day Saturday, ending about 10:00 PM Saturday night.

When we reflect upon the 35 years of the **Western Open**, it is the people who have made it so special. Many of the members of the **Western Open Committee** have been on board for every contest. We’ve followed some of our “fiddle kids” on their journeys as they competed all the way from the Peewee through the Open Division. Many of those “kids” are now fiddle teachers, and it is with great joy that we watch *their* children follow in their parents’ footsteps on the **Western Open** stage. A few of those whose first public performance was on the **Western Open** stage have gone on to make their living making music.

There will be people in the audience each year who have attended every contest, as well as those who will be attending for the very first time. Every year there are new contestants and new audience members, all of whom we invite in to our "Fiddle Family." We say to all, "Welcome!" and we look forward to sharing the magic of old time fiddle music with all of you, at the **Western Open Fiddle Championships**, Thursday through Saturday at the end of the third *full* week in October, 19-21, 2017.

Western Open
Fiddle Championships
present
Byron Berline
in Concert
7:30 PM Friday
October 20, 2017



530-527-6127
texshar@pachell.net
www.WesternOpenFiddle.com



Red Bluff
Elks Lodge
355 Gilmore Road



Official Western Open
Fiddle Championships Venue
Call 531-529-7500

Here are some of the changes we have made at the 2017 Western Open in an attempt to continually evolve the contest and keep it "contestant friendly":

- 1) Instead of a concert Thursday night, October 19, we are planning to host an **Old Time Gospel Jam** beginning at 6:30 PM. Opening the evening's proceedings will be the fabulous **Alldrin Family**. There will be no admission charge, and participants will just sign up at the door for performance slots.
- 2) We are moving the concert to Friday night and have re-worked the schedule to accommodate this change. (*See the tentative schedule*). The schedule was also changed to reflect parent requests to decrease the time between the first and second rounds for our two youngest divisions; consolidating the Young Adult and Adult divisions; and eliminating the Jr Jukebox (because of a trend of decreased participation). For 2017, both rounds of the Peewee, JR JR, Senior, Sr Sr, Jr Picking, and Open Picking will be completed on Friday before dinner. Awards will be handed out after dinner and the winners will be invited to each play one tune as the warm-up for the concert to follow. The Open Jukebox Division will be on Saturday night.
- 3) Speaking of concert, **Byron Berline** will be our headliner on Friday.
- 4) The Open Division will pay only 5 places, but we will increase the prize money to the following:
1st place \$600; 2nd place \$475; 3rd place \$400; 4th place \$325; and 5th place \$250.
- 5) Due to lack of contestants over the past several years, we will be consolidating the Young Adult and Adult into one division, Adult ages 18-54.
- 6) The judges for 2017 will be unsequestered for the entire contest-- sitting in front of the contestants, stage right, with the timer and scorekeeper sitting beside the judges. Among the reasons for this change were: better communication between the judges and MC; and improving the judges' experience of the contestants' performances
- 7) Judges will continue to be encouraged to add comments to the scoresheets.
- 8) The 4" time limit will continue to be strictly enforced with no grace period for all fiddle divisions.
- 9) We are adding a clarification to the rules that having three standard guitar accompanists will incur a 5 point penalty. We have had the rule for some time, but have not had any consequence for violating the rule.
- 10) Because of the changes to the schedule, changes to the ticket prices were necessary:

Thursday-- no charge unless you choose to purchase dinner

Friday-- All Day ticket includes the concert-- \$20 General Admission,
\$15 Senior; \$15 concert only

Saturday-- Single day ticket prices remain the same-- \$10 General Admission,
\$8 Senior

All Events Pass-- includes all contest and concert: \$25 General admission, \$20 Senior

A **ribbon** gets you in to all events free: contestant, guest, official, judge etc.

Check out the website at www.WesternOpenFiddle.com for updates and more formation.



District 7

Gregory Gross

Kid Fiddle Fest' is the nickname assigned to San Diego Unified School District's workshop for children from elementary through high school level. This program enlists several mentors from District 7 for fast-paced instruction to kid fiddlers 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 five workshop sessions beginning mid-October, plus an exciting showcase performance on stage in November. We expect a large number of repeat participants each year.

District 8

Marlene Nord

Our fall season is in full swing. Although we have had a rather unseasonably hot summer, we've had hearty souls attending our Sunday jams, braving the heat to pick, grin and listen.

In August, our very own Sus Corez presented an excellent workshop on two pioneer female Bluegrass artists who blazed trails for many, right up to today's ladies of the genre. Since our State Director was otherwise committed, my designated driver, Merrilyn Lemons and I traveled up to Sacramento for the State Board of Directors meeting in late August. We had a lovely time jamming on Friday night and became caught up on the happenings at the state level.

Our annual barbecue is coming up at the end of September. It features a yummy meal, loads of conversation, and don't forget our usual brand of Super Country and Bluegrass music to follow. I will try to get some pictures to include in the next Soundpost. Talk to you next time.

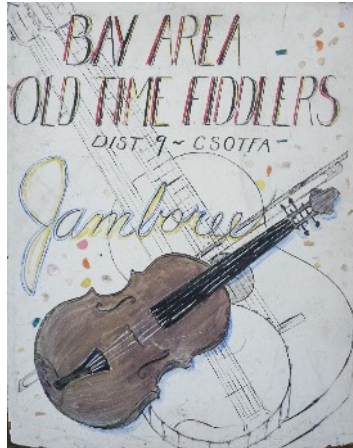


Editors Note: I am aware that a lot of our members are not contest goers and/or are not interested in the contests. But as editor I believe it is my duty to attempt to represent all our members. Fiddle contests are one of the main ways the Association promotes and perpetuates Old Time Fiddle Music. Contests are a way to encourage young fiddle students to perform and hone their musical talent as well as a way for our seasoned fiddle players to enjoy and perform the music they have come to love. We also hope that these young fiddle players will continue to grow and carry on this old time music that seems to be fading away. So if you haven't been to a contest look for one in your area and go see what it's all about. It will definitely get your foot tappin' and put a smile on your face.

Cathy Agnew

District 9

Ruth Oveland



Hello to all the Fiddlers and Supporters of Fiddle Music throughout the State!

District 9 sends their warmest greetings (yes, it's been very WARM in the north state) and invite you to join us on the 4th Sunday of the month in Castro Valley, CA. See the Soundpost page for more specific details.

It is with a sad heart to tell you we have lost another of our treasured members. Don Amick (August 19, 1934 – September 6 2017) a long time member of District 9 passed away last week. Services will be this coming weekend (Saturday, September 16th) in Hayward, CA. We will miss his kind face, gracious manner, and his singing and guitar playing. Our thoughts and prayers go to his wife, Jeannette and the Amick family.

On a more exciting note, District 9 has inherited a lot of records, newsletters, and posters, see above, from a former member who passed away a few months ago. In cleaning out her mother's garage, Vonnie Tater found the above noted items in a couple of boxes, plus the posters. Vonnie said her mom (Doris Higby) told her she (Vonnie) painted both the posters, but she doesn't remember doing them. I've had an opportunity for a brief look at some of the records. It is a history of the District 9 membership, dating back to the mid 1970's when District 9 was formed. It includes member's names, addresses, dues paid, as well as the income and expenses for the District. Wow!! What a treasure of information. Just taking Doris' records, we can track and establish a membership list dating back to 1974-75 and move forward. I want to take the time to sit down and look at each ledger book and be able to write a history of District 9 to share with our members. Some will find it interesting, others not so much. But I think if you have an idea of the history of your organization, knowledge of where they have come from and what was taking place, you have a better understanding of where we are at present. As noted above, if you are in the East Bay area on a 4th Sunday, come join us and don't forget to bring your instrument, your voice and/or your ears for a very entertaining afternoon.

District 10

Mike Drayton



Youth contestants line up for their turns at the mike

Heirloom Festival Fiddle-Off in Santa Rosa Triples in Size

On the afternoon of September 7th, The Heirloom Festival was the scene of the 2nd Annual Fiddle-Off. This year, participation grew quite a bit, with 6 players in the Youth Division, and 13 in the Adult Division. \$1,000 in cash prizes, a fiddle (with case and bow), and various fiddlin' accessories were awarded.

Youth Division awards: 1st place to Miles Quayle, 2nd place to Ari Glasser and 3rd place to Maya Leonard.

Adult Division: 1st place to Sylvia Walkey, 2nd to David (Gus) Garelick, 3rd to Bob Palasek, 4th to Dan Engle. Music books, strings, rosin, and certificates for bow repairing were among the other gifts that were given out in addition to cash prizes.

District 10 is looking forward to assisting with next year's event keep it in mind for early September.



Gus Garelick takes a turn behind the display of heirloom squash



Dan Engle plays while Tim Rued holds the milk jug full of tune names

FIDDLIN' DOWN THE TRACKS

Sept. 15-16, 2017

CONTEST WINNERS

Small Fry Fiddle Division

- 1st—Daniel Crotty, Coarsegold, CA
- 2nd—Isabell Ibarra, Hanford, CA

Junior-Junior Fiddle Division

- 1st—Leah Bowen, Sparks, NV
- 2nd—Nathan Crotty, Coarsegold, NV
- 3rd—Cathy Pierce, Bakersfield, CA
- 4th—Lorelai Kline, Hanford, CA
- 5th—Ethan Yang, Tehachapi, CA

Junior Fiddle Division

- 1st—Joseph Wallek, Tehachapi, CA
- 2nd—Abbie Halsey, Hanford, CA
- 3rd—BJ Zheng, Tehachapi, CA
- 4th—Megan Ross, Hanford, CA
- 5th—Joy Robb, Tehachapi, CA

Adult Fiddle Division

- 1st—Emily Hamilton, Tehachapi, CA
- 2nd—Kristin Honeycutt, Tehachapi, CA
- 3rd—Bailey Schafer, Tehachapi, CA
- 4th—Adriana Montenegro, Tehachapi, CA
- 5th—Cristelle Ellison—Gilbert, Bakersfield, CA

Senior Fiddle Division

- 1st—Dan Touchstone, San Diego, CA
- 2nd—Lisa Rosa, Hanford, CA
- 3rd—Karen Linde-Lusich, Hart Flat, CA
- 4th—Jeff Thorsnes, Tehachapi, CA
- 5th—Annette Scherr, Tehachapi, CA

Senior-Senior Fiddle Division

- 1st—Gayel Pitchford, Tehachapi, CA
- 2nd—Charley Oveland, Saratoga, CA
- 3rd—Sharon Ellsworth, Tehachapi, CA
- 4th—Fay Shanholtzer, Bakersfield, CA

Open Fiddle Division

- 1st—Hughie Smith, Bakersfield, CA
- 2nd—Stacey Snodgrass, Hanford, CA
- 3rd—Michael McManus, Pearblossom, CA
- 4th—Katie Jones, Tehachapi, CA
- 5th—Caleb Palmquist, Tehachapi, CA

Grand Championship Winner

Hughie Smith, Bakersfield, CA

Cello/Bass Fiddle Division

- 1st—Piper Meisler, Tehachapi,
- 2nd—Rebecca Carol, Tehachapi,
- 3rd—Natalie Whiteside, Tehachapi,
- 4th Abe Crotty, Coarsegold, CA

Twin Fiddle Division

- 1st—Stacey Snodgrass, Hanford / Hughie Smith, Bakersfield, CA
- 2nd—Joseph Wallek, Tehachapi / Abbie Halsey, Hanford, CA
- 3rd—Madisyn Allen/Lisa Rosa, Hanford,

Junior Picking Division

- 1st—Joseph Wallek, Tehachapi,
- 2nd—BJ Zheng, Tehachapi,
- 3rd—Mitchel Kline—Hanford,
- 4th—Grace Doyle, LeMoore,
- 5th—Lorelai Kline, Hanford,

Open Picking Division

- 1st—Michael McManus, Pearblossom,
- 2nd—Caleb Palmquist, Tehachapi,
- 3rd—Jack Pierce, Bakersfield,
- 4th—Gayel Pitchford, Tehachapi,
- 5th—Katie Jones, Tehachapi,

Junior Novelty Division

- 1st—BJ Zheng (piano), Tehachapi,
- 2nd—Joseph Wallek (piano), Tehachapi,
- 3rd—Abby Doyle (piano), LeMoore,
- 4th—Piper Meisler (viola), Tehachapi
- 5th—Natalie Whiteside (viola), Tehachapi,

Open Novelty

- 1st—Gayel Pitchford (piano), Tehachapi
- 2nd—Caleb Palmquist (viola), Tehachapi
- 3rd—Bailey Schafer (viola), Tehachapi
- 4th—Katie Jones (viola), Tehachapi
- 5th—Michael McManus (viola), Tehachapi

Accompanist

- 1st—Gayel Pitchford—Tehachapi
- 2nd—Jim French, Weaverville
- 3rd—Stacey Snodgrass, Hanford
- 4th—Wayne Agnew, Moorpark
- 5th—Jack Pierce, Bakersfield



Abe Crotty from Coarsegold, CA in the Cello/Bass Fiddle Division (he is 6!!! and playing a 1/16th size string bass)

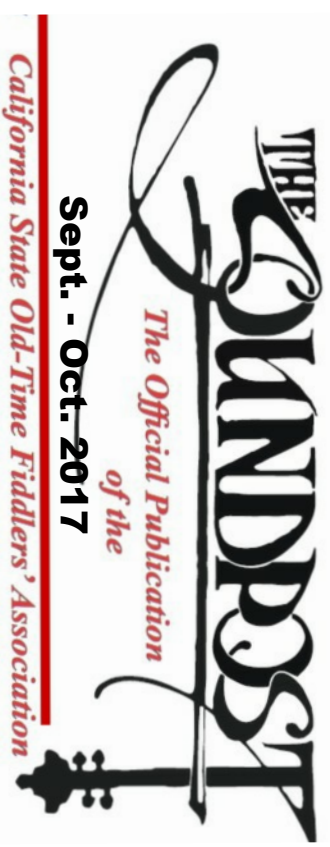


Lisa Rosa, Hanford, Senior Fiddle Div. with Jim French of Weaverville accompanying.



Charley Oveland, Saratoga in the Senior-Seniors. Accompanist Wayne Agnew, Moorpark, & Jim French, Weaverville





Sept. - Oct. 2017

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

