

Presidents Message

Dear Friends,

I can't let this opportunity go by without again thanking the many people who made last month's Western Open a success in the face of some significant obstacles. As did much of California, we here in Red Bluff had a two-day power outage in early October. The week of the contest, PG&E started notifying us that we would lose power at the contest on Saturday—either at 1:00 PM, 3:00 PM, 6:00 PM, or not at all—depending on which source you believed. To make the story as short as possible, the committee leaped into action. On Friday, we published a compressed schedule to end the contest by 5:00 on Saturday, which included all the contested rounds, but absolutely nothing else. After lunch, we moved into the dining hall which has floor to ceiling windows so we'd have light even if we lost electricity. I MCed the last few hours of the contest, while Tex and many, many others, packed up in three hours what it had taken two days to unpack. The contest ended at 5:00; contestants went and enjoyed the Afterglow Buffet prepared by Laura Spence; and at 6:00 as Tex was picking up the last box to load into our new Western Open cargo trailer (thank you McConnell Foundation!), the lights went out. I am so grateful to everyone—contestants, audience, Western Open Committee, judges etc.—who cheerfully dealt with the very interesting hand we had been dealt! We look forward to a far less eventful 2020 Contest!

I've always thought that ending the calendar year with celebrations of Thanksgiving and Christmas sets up the new year to start on a very positive note. So, please enjoy these last few weeks of 2019 as we get ready to start 2020. This is also a time to reflect on the past year and, in that, we remember those who have gone on to join in that heavenly fiddle jam. We celebrate victories—we mourn losses—and we always look forward!

As Tex says, "Keep Fiddlin'!",

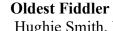
Sharon



The 37 Annual Western Open Fiddle Championships is in the history books!! In spite of some difficulties as described in Sharon's message the contest was a huge success thanks in most part to the dedication and hard work of Sharon and Tex. They have the passion that keeps this contest going. See contest results and pictures on pages 3 & 4.

2 79/9





Hughie Smith, Barstow, age 86 Youngest Fiddler Kyla Kozlowski, Chico, age 4

California State Old Time Fiddlers' Association P.O. Box 1703 Oroville, CA 95965

State Officers

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District 8: Charletta Erb - charlettaerb@gmail.com

District 9: Bob Palasek - r03palasek@sbcglobal.net

District 10: Mark Hogan-hogiemoon@comcast.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 Free Old Time Fiddle Jams 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month 1:00-4:00 1st Sunday, St. James Lutheran Church 2500 Shasta View Blvd. Redding 1:00 3:00 Open Circle Jam, 3:00 Board Meeting, open to all members . 3rd Sunday, Palo Cedro Community Hall, 22037 Old Forty-Four Drive, Palo Cedro 1:00 Open Jam, 2:00 Open Mic, and 3:00 Concert Refreshments for sale.

 Website: http://www.northstatefiddlers.com
- District 7 2nd Sunday 12:00-2:45PM: Terrace Estates Clubhouse, 1815 Sweetwater Road, Spring Valley, CA 3rd Sunday 12:30-1:00 PM Workshop, 1:00-3:00 Jam: Encinitas Community Center, 1140 Oakcrest Park Dr., Room 140, Encinitas CA 4th Sunday 12:00-2:45 PM: 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 Cafe, Cotati. Every 4th Sunday 3:00 to 5:00. Janette Duncan, Chris Carney, Steve DeLap, 707-570-2745.

Western Open Results, October 24-26, 2019

Peewee (age 8 and under) [5]

- 1. Sophie McNeil, Reno NV
- 2. Adaya Estep, Shingletown
- 3. Kendall Harrigan, Willows
- 4. Kyla Kozlowski, Chico
- 5. Lucas Wiechman, Redding

Youngest Fiddler

Kyla Kozlowski, Chico, age 4

Junior Junior (age 12 and under) [12]

- 1. Niko Quale, Alameda
- 2. Eli Glasser, Santa Rosa
- 3. Jessica Hipwell, Murphy ID
- 4. Ari Glasser, Santa Rosa
- 5. Colton Wichman, Redding
- 6. Gage Lindsey, Redding
- 7. Brooke Stadelmaier, Fort Collins CO
- 8. Liam McNeil, Reno NV
- 9. Wren Lindsey, Redding
- 10. Kiley Lincoln, Red Bluff

Junior (ages 17 and under) [10]

- 1. Sophie Peña, Palo Cedro
- 2. Cate Huiras, Chico
- 3. Miriam Codreanu, Nampa ID
- 4. Maureen McNeil, Reno NV
- 5. Ally McLanahan, Reno NV

Adult (ages 37-54) [3]

- 1. Grant Wheeler, Portland OR
- 2. Holly Sternberg, Reno NV
- 3. Denise Jenkins,

Senior (ages 55-69) [3]

- 1. Bobbie Pearce, Nampa ID
- 2. Joe Osborn, San Rafael
- 3. Tina Carlsen, Minden NV

Senior Senior (ages 70 and up) [7]

- 1. Hughie Smith, Barstow
- 2. Nicki Carlisle, Shingletown
- 3. Kathy Kampschmidt, Willows
- 4. Ann Robinson, Casper WY
- 5. Jane Sprouse, Walnut Creek

Oldest Fiddler

1. Hughie Smith, Barstow, age 86

Open (any age) [6]

- 1. Katrina Nicolayeff, Nampa ID
- 2. Tashina Clarridge, Forks of Salmon
- 3. Makaela Shippy, Caldwell ID
- 4. Leah Bowen, Sparks NV
- 5. Alex Sharps, Santa Cruz
- 6. Ginger Vogel, Chico

Junior Twin Fiddle (age 17 and under) [2]

- 1. Helaina Rogers/Natalie Parker-Blount
- 2. Maureen & Fiona McNeil

Open Twin Fiddle (age 18 and up) [5]

- 1. Katrina Nicolayeff/Mirian Codreanu
- 2. Tashina Clarridge/Hughie Smith
- 3. Christine Hofan/Tricia Ferguson

Open Picking (any age) [3]

- 1. Jacob Akana, Redding
- 2. Connie Curry, Chico
- 3. Alex Sharps, Santa Cruz

Junior Picking [8]

- 1. Jillian Alldrin, Palo Cedro
- 2. Jacob Wiechman, Redding
- 3. Liam McNeil, Reno NV

Open Jukebox (any age) [3]

- 1. Ann Robinson, Casper WY
- 2. Ageless
- 3. Munchkins

Junior Jukebox (17 and under) [5]

- 1. Cate Huiras, Chico
- 2. Ari and Eli Glasser, Santa Rosa
- 3. Kate Parker-Blount, Shingletown

Accompanist [4]

- 1. Jim French, Weaverville
- 2. Al Myers, Redding
- 3. Don Nichols, Shingletown
- 4. Bob Gardner, Atherton

Robert Strawn Award (most beautiful waltz) [12]

- 1. Tashina Clarridge, Forks of Salmon
- 2. Katrina Nicolayeff, Nampa ID
- 3. Leah Bowen, Sparks NV

Hot Fiddle Award [4]

- 1. Tashina Clarridge, Forks of Salmon
- 2. Leah Bowen, Sparks NV
- 3. Holly Sternberg, Reno NV

Junior Piano (17 and under) [1]

1. Allie Braito, Cottonwood

Junior Junior Piano (9-12) [4]

- 1. Ari Glasser, Santa Rosa
- 2. Isaac McDonald, Willows
- 3. Emmalyne Smith, Willows
- 4. Eli Glasser, Santa Rosa



Fiddle Judges

Picking Judges

Danita Gardner, Atherton

Melissa Lincoln, Red Bluff

Tallon Sandoval, San Diego

Eileen Walter, Portland OR

Jim French, Weaverville

Becky Huskey, Red Bluff

Kathy Kampschmidt, Willows

Nathan Townley, Red Bluff

David Johns, Quincy

Al Myers, Redding

Piano Judges

Cody Stadelmaier, Fort Collins CO

Randy Warner, Washoe Valley NV





PICTURE REVIEW OF THE WESTERN OPEN

The folks at District 6 put on a great fiddle contest every year. Thanks to Lyle Dixson from Dist 5, who is officially the unofficial photographer for CSOTFA, we can all enjoy the pictures and



District Reports

District 1

Mary Rose Preston

November is beautiful in Butte County. The leaves are turning colors as we marked the one-year anniversary of the Camp Fire.

Saturday, December 7: The Fiddle Workshop folks and friends will be performing a short concert at the Lake Oroville Visitors Center on Saturday, December 7 at 12:45 p.m. during the Bidwell Bar Association's Annual Frontier Christmas. This is a fun family event, free, and all are invited to enjoy the music and beautiful scenery. Come enjoy some old-fashioned fun, with pioneer craft making, picture taking with Santa, and food and beverages for sale: hot dogs, corn dogs, bangers, beans and sweet goodies.

The Monday Fiddle Workshops are on break until mid-January, although one member has invited the group to keep playing on those nights at her place. Thanks for keeping the music going!

We also have our fourth Sunday Jams at the Oroville Senior Center. We are looking forward to the big Christmas Potluck and Jam on Sunday, December 8 (a change from the fourth Sunday, December only).

A group continues to play the first Sunday of each month at the Pacifica Country Crest Senior Living in Oroville. District 1 has scholarships available for lessons and instrument loans.

(Circle) Jam Sessions are 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. the fourth Sunday of each month (except December) at the Feather River Senior Center, 1335 Myers Street, Oroville.. Bring a favorite potluck dish and enjoy a nice afternoon of good music and good company.



District 3 Gayel Pitchford

At the moment, Dist. 3 doesn't have any news. Jana Jae is running a fiddle workshop out at 29 Palms on February 28 – March 1, 2020. Readers can go to janajae.com for more info. (She actually asked me to help her with it, but the Tehachapi Symphony has a concert on March 1, and I can't be there and here at the same time—too bad. I'll bet it would be really fun.) Jana is a really good fiddler, with lots of "on the road experience," and such a wonderful attitude with people.

The Country Oaks Baptist Facilities Use Request has been submitted for next year's Fiddlin' Down the Tracks contest. Dates for the 2020 contest depend on their response. We will get it published as soon as we know.

The Board voted to chose John Hartford as our honored fiddler for 2020, and there will be a John Hartford Division, with a big trophy and bragging rights for the best rendition by a fiddler of an original John Hartford composition. He wrote dozens of songs, including Gentle on my Mind.

So stay tuned for future updates. It should be fun!





Pat Nelson

Wow, time flies by! Here is our report from District 4. District 4 had a great turnout for our November meeting.

We are again looking forward to our Christmas gathering on December 1 from 12:30 to 4:00. We plan on our usual holiday meal of turkey, ham. side dishes, and LOTS of good music. It is great to see so many fiddlers all together making music and enjoying each other's company. We will be collecting dues for next year, so bring cash or checks and don't forget your silverware!



Membership Report

Charley Oveland

District	НОН	Spouses	Children	Total
1	54	20	4	78
3	28	9	9	46
4	22	10	1	33
5	80	39	29	148
6	64	26	20	110
7	43	15	5	63
8	110	47	3	160
9	53	23	6	82
10	68	22	21	111
TOTAL	S 522	211	98	831

District 8

Sus Corez

As the year winds down, we are preparing for the final two gatherings of 2019 and preparing for our annual Holiday Luncheon and Officer Installation on Sunday, December 8th.

We will be missing our friend and membership secretary, Karen Schlenker, who passed away recently. She was a long time member and devoted to Fiddler's, a group she truly loved.

District 8 hosted a booth at the annual Ojai Days event in an effort to inform the community about our group and what we do. Our members brought our joyful music to the normally sedate quadrant and folks just loved it!

A group of us performed at the El Rancho Days event which celebrated the early days of Ventura County. Our guys sounded terrific!

On October 27, we held our annual District 8 BBQ and potluck where we cooked up burgers and dogs for the membership. After lunch, we broke out the guitars, fiddles, mangos and banjos for a terrific autumn afternoon.

We continue to bring our music to our local senior centers. Most of our board will remain in tact for the coming year and we're grateful for their commitment.

Happy holidays to all of you from all of us in Oak View!



Lyle Dixson

District 5 continues with our 2nd Sunday monthly get together. In addition many of our members attend several other jam sessions in the area. Our November 2nd Sunday session was our combined annual Fiddlekids program / scholarship fundraiser and Thanksgiving Dinner.

We had about 75 people attend. 4 Turkeys and few left overs. About 25 musicians a dozen of those musicians are kids. The kids are even taking leads on songs.







District 6

Becky Husky

District 6 had a busy fall. Board Members performed at the Manton Apple Festival, Burney Falls Heritage Days, Dairyville Orchard Festival, The Oak Run & The Pilgrim Church Fall Festivals, and ended up opening for the Western Open at the Hymn Sing. The board members spent 4 days preparing and helped run this event. We're so grateful for Tex Ash and Sharon Barrett for their endless hours and dedication for "37 Years" of chairing this event. A great time was enjoyed by all.

We held our local elections for the upcoming Board of Directors and we will announce the board in our biweekly email announcements and also at our Christmas Potluck Jam. We continue to focus on building up District 6. We are supporting education of Old Time Fiddling and gearing Jams and performances to highlight our younger musicians. Parents and all members are encouraged to attend our Board Meetings. We want this organization to thrive again and feel that "Youth" is the key to keeping it growing.

We still have a circle jam from 1:00-3:00 the first Sunday of each month, followed by our 3:00 monthly board meeting. We also meet the 3rd Sunday of each month at 1:00 for a circle jam and from 2:00-4:00 the stage is set for Open Mic, all attendees are encouraged to perform.

We are getting ready for the Holidays. We will hold our Annual Christmas Party and Potluck dinner Sunday, December 15th at the Palo Cedro Community Center. Feasting starts @ 2:00 followed by a festive concert from the amazing "Alldrin Family".

Happy Holidays to All.





Linda Rinner

Things are pretty quiet this time of year for District 7. We are in the midst of electing officers and advisors for 2020. It's hard to believe it's that time again. The results will be announced at our annual Christmas Jam which will be on December 8th at The Golden Corral. If you happen to be in our area come join us, the food is good and the music is great. We can catch up with friends we haven't seen in awhile or make new friends. You can find the details on our website.

http://www.sandiegofiddler.org/itsallaboutfiddling.html, or on our Facebook page,

 $https://www.facebook.com/sandiegofiddlers/\ .$

Our 2nd and 4th Sunday Fiddle Tune Jams are still going strong. Our 3rd Sunday Fiddle Tune Jam has been on the move around North San Diego County. This summer it has been held at various outdoor locations to take advantage of the beautiful weather in the area. Avery Ellisman has put in a lot of effort to organize the North County jams and find a suitable location each month. Thank you Avery!

We would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and a very Happy New year. We wish a safe and happy holiday season for everyone and hope we see you at a District 7 Fiddle Tune Jam and the 2020 Julian Fiddle and Pickin' Contest. There will be more news on the contest coming soon.



On behalf of the officers and directors of the California State Old Time Fiddlers' we wish you a Happy & safe Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas. We hope you get to celebrate the season with your loved ones.



District 9

Bob Palasek

Reporters: Jean Kalvig and Todd Townsend

In December, District 9 moves its usual 4th Sunday Jam to earlier in the month. We will be holding our annual Holiday Celebration, Jam, Pot Luck, and Holiday Gift Raffle on the **second** Sunday, December 8, from 1:30 to 5:00 at our usual venue, the meeting hall of The Castro Valley United Methodist Church, 19806 Wisteria Street, in Castro Valley. If you are in the area, please come and join us.

Over Labor Day weekend some District 9 members and friends played mid-day sessions of Oldtime Fiddle and Banjo for the annual RailFair festival at the Ardenwood Historic Farm in Fremont. We played front porch music on two different days.

RailFair celebrates the railroad history of the region, and CSOTFA 9 members have been supporting it continuously for more than 10 years.

Fiddlers included Bob Palasek, Patti Bossert, and friend of the club Wayne Grabowski, and banjo players Steve Goldfield, Paul Clarke, and friend of the club Élan Alford. A very popular addition is always Lee Clarke, who demonstrates, and engages, oldtime dancing for children and adults throughout the shows.

Our two 3 hour shows were seen as a real support to visitor draw by the RailFair management, and District 9 received support for its budget as well.

In November, some of our members were able to play old time fiddle and banjo music for a Livermore Farmers' Market event. Proceeds from that helped District 9's account as well.



District 9 October jam. George, Paul, and Susan.

Here is a musing from one of our members, Jesse Kincaid about an encounter with Herman Johnson, Master Fiddler. I thought it would be a very nice memory to share with others. Perhaps others knew Mr. Herman Johnson as well! Submitted by Judith Jones

My Visit with Herman Johnson

My wife's parents lived in Texas City, not close but not inordinately far from Shawnee, Oklahoma, the home of Herman Johnson, champion fiddler, 780 miles on Interstate 45 North through Houston, Dallas, and on up through Norman to Shawnee.

I was about midway into fiddling after decades playing guitar, and I cast about for a seminar, some one-time event to learn fiddle. There is a champion fiddler with a school in Montana. I called them. They said it would cost \$500. I heard about Herman Johnson in Oklahoma. If it worked, I could see Mr. Johnson on a car trip from Texas City. I called him and said sure and he didn't charge just come on out and we'll 'get after it.'

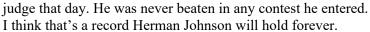
In the summer of 1994, I drove from Texas City north towards Shawnee. I bought a basket of peaches roadside for \$4 to bring along. Mrs. Johnson used them for a peach pie. It was a hot and humid summer. I found their house out of town in a country setting. And soon enough I was in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Johnson. They showed me my bedroom, and we had dinner, then we played fiddles. Mostly Mr. Johnson played because I'm with the most champion fiddler in the history of contests and I'm just starting. Mister Johnson played well and took a few moments to show me. Mostly I was reading music of his stuff that a student had copied.

I stayed 3 days that began with breakfast, then 'getting after it,' then lunch, then 'getting after it,' then maybe go out to their lapidary shop in the shed in the back, before dinner and 'getting after it.'One night a guitar accompanist came over and the two of them ran through a gamut of well-known fiddle contest tunes.

I'm a performer, a singer really. Play guitar with that like most do. I came to fiddling when I auditioned as a bass player for Doug Adamz country band Bravo. They didn't hire my bass playing, but Doug hired me to play guitar and sing at summer Wednesdays of hotel Bar B Qs. I saw the impression he made with a fiddle and I bought my first one for \$75; right out of the newspaper, a guy delivered it and all. As a beginner I entered every contest I could find, the first being the Marin County Fair contest. There were 5 ribbons and 5 contestants. I got fifth place and got my first ribbon. I was actually last but getting that ribbon was good and I've gone on to get some seconds, some thirds, some just for being there. And my one first place, the day nobody could beat me, at the Ojai Fiddle Contest, 1998. I competed twice in the Weiser National Old Time Fiddle Championships, coming in dead last the first time (early in my trajectory) and 28th the second time a few years later.

Mark O'Connor was conducting a class that year and out in the cool evening campgrounds I was present when Mark ran through songs long into the night with a crowd in awe. I've competed on 50 contests. I play a couple of things on the violin with my band but the demands of being a performer and writer caught up with my fiddle champion yearnings.

I saw Mister Johnson one more time.It was at Weiser. We were in the same hotel. Said hello but he was hurrying to



When it came to smooth, clean fiddle playing with flawless technique, perfect intonation and rhythmic feel and, most importantly, some gorgeous renditions he composed of traditional breakdowns, waltzes, and rags, there was no one better than Herman Johnson in a fiddle contest.

Born into a fiddling family in Sparks, OK, in 1920, and inspired by Bob Wills, Herman Johnson started playing professionally with his brothers in the Johnson Boys, and in the '40s with a number of western swing bands, including Herman and the Melodiers, The Oklahoma Ragtimers and The Harmony Boys. After serving in the Army during the latter years of WWII, Johnson set aside his aspirations as a professional musician and concentrated on supporting his family. He confined it to sessions with friends, local jam sessions and, his house. In public he could be found competing in fiddle contests, where he proved a formidable contestant.

Herman became attracted to fiddle contests while still quite young, participating in his first one at the age of twelve. Fiddle contests in the United States date back to 1736. To quote another legendary competitor, "when Herman showed up you knew you were playing for second place."

Herman continued to compete in fiddle contests from time to time and around 1960 started traveling often to contests in Oklahoma and Texas with guitarist and dear friend Ralph McGraw. In 1968, Herman and Ralph took their first trip to Weiser, Idaho to compete in the National Championship there. There were over 300 other fiddle players. Herman won the championship that year for the first time at the age of 48. He went on to win the championship another four times and today still holds the record as the only person to be undefeated in the event.

Herman Johnson has also won the Oklahoma State Championship, the Grand Master Fiddler Championship in Nashville, Tennessee, and the World Championship in Crocket, Texas. He is known as a gracious competitor, a sharp dresser, and a generous mentor. In an interview, when asked what he loved most about the fiddle, Herman replied, "I think a fiddle or a violin is the greatest instrument in the world, it can be used so many ways, you can use this with about any kind of music, four strings, and you get so much out of them." He gave me copies of all his music a student had transcribed. I'm working on it. Herman Johnson, the legendary undefeated contest fiddler from Shawnee, Oklahoma, lived just shy of 100 years. It was my unique privilege to have a visit with the champion American fiddler Herman Johnson and Mrs. Johnson that summer in Oklahoma. It was a hot time.

Judith Jones

I hosted a most awesome Fiddle Workshop in Sonoma with Rodney Miller as the fiddle Instructor. I am sure y'all have met him but here is a little intro:

Rodney Miller was designated a "Master Fiddler" in 1983 by the National Endowment for the Arts, served as NH Artist Laureate, 2014-2016, and is a National Heritage Award Nominee. He is widely considered to be the foremost exponent of New England style fiddling, a uniquely American blend of French Canadian and Celtic influences. He has toured the US., British Isles, Australia and Denmark, performed and taught at hundreds of music and dance festivals and recorded many fiddle albums, often playing instruments that he crafted himself. He has composed over 250 tunes, many of which have become standards in the ever-growing body of traditional fiddle tunes. This quote taken from an interview that he gave to Sarah Jane Nelson - Fiddler Magazine: "These are my inspirations. I was taught to play the tradition with respect, but also be open to new ideas. I have written a lot of tunes myself that keep the traditional feeling true to heart but also leave room for new takes on old ideas. I have captured a lot of the new tune writing that is taking place in the contra dance scene today. Several of my original fiddle compositions have been included in these I think a tradition that is a 'living' tradition is so important."

Rodney is currently working on the publication of his original fiddle tunes with a 2020 release date. http://www.rodneymiller.net

The attendees, in the photos, are Janette Duncan, Kenny Blacklock, Gus Garelick, Katie Bridges, Barbara Jacobs, Annie Zollinger, Margie Rued, Judy Forest, Duncan & Ginny Matheson, Carol Harrison, and 3 of our very young fiddlers-Sierra, Ava & McKenna.

I was impressed with the fiddling of these 3 youngsters. I hadn't heard them for a while. It shows that they are definitely practicing!! And, good job Morgan Cochneuer! (Morgan is their teacher). Listening to these young fiddlers was an added bonus on top of being able to hear Rodney play.

These 3 youngsters were kind enough to model our District 10 T-shirts. Although, the back of their t-shirts say 'The Young Old-Timers' and the back of the adult t-shirts shows the District 10 Logo. Gus is wearing his....even though one can not distinguish it 'cuz he's sitting way in back.













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CSOTFA Districts

California State Old-Time Fiddlers' Association

