



# Fiddler's Rag

Vol. 40, Number 10  
Celebrating 39 years

Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association  
www.scvfa.org or www.fiddlers.org

October 2012  
Next Jam: **Oct. 7**

## President's Note

by Richard Brooks



Thanks to our friends at the Mercury News who listed our jam in the "What's Happening" section, many new folks came to enjoy our September 2 jam. Attendance was the largest we've seen on a Labor Day weekend.

## Fiddler's Rag Editor Changes

Pete Showman is temporarily acting as our newsletter editor. We thank Mary Larsen for being our editor since last December and wish her well in her future endeavors.

## Beginners' Circle (Slow Jam)

Tom Clausen lead the Beginners' Circle in September with twelve participants. Enjoy his article about the tune and its history on page 4. If you would like to lead a beginners circle, please let me know.

## Featured Performer

The 'bout Time band is our Featured Performer this month, playing at 3:30 pm. Their bluegrass repertoire is steeped in the classic songs of Bill Monroe, Jimmy Martin, Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs, and Ralph and Carter Stanley with material from AKUS, Lonesome River Band and Lynn Morris.



**The 'bout Time bluegrass band**

L to R: Mike Omodt, Linda Williams, Dave Williams, Mark Searles, and Pete Hallesy.

## KidFiddle Workshop

**Luke Abbott** will teach our KidFiddle workshop for youths 17 and under. It starts at 2:00 pm. Tuition is \$5.00.

Luke Abbott has been teaching music for over 8 years and has been an instructor at five kids' music camps. His goal is to bring out the natural musicality in each student through an emphasis on playing by ear and musical awareness.

Luke teaches fiddle, guitar, banjo, mandolin, Dobro, bass, and singing in Santa Cruz.



Luke Abbott

## November 4 – our 11th Youth Fiddle Contest

Mark your calendars. On November 4, we will have our 11th Youth Fiddle Contest. The age limit is 17. Tell all your friends, families, and neighbors! Contest rules and the entry form are at [www.fiddlers.org/contest](http://www.fiddlers.org/contest).

If you can help in the preparation before the contest or at the contest, please call contest chair Jaclyn Chiew at (408) 996-xxxx, or call assistant chair Pete Showman, (408) 255-0297.

We have an opening for a trustee and for a playout coordinator. After his many years of dedicated service, Paul Clarke has decided to give others an opportunity to contribute in these ways.

- Richard Brooks

## In This Issue:

## Page

President's Message .....	1
Paul Clarke: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Senior Fiddler; .....	2
SCVFA Happenings: Board Mtg. Highlights ....	2
Youth Fiddle Contest, Trustee Nominations, Open Officer Positions, Playout Oct 5 .....	3
Teaching a Tune in the Beginners' Circle .....	4
Contest Flyer and Entry Form .....	5, 6
September Jam (Photos) .....	7

# SCVFA Happenings

The Fiddler's Rag is published monthly by the Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association and is provided to members of the Association. The Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association (SCVFA), founded in 1973 in San Jose, California, is a nonprofit, volunteer-operated organization dedicated to the preservation, teaching, and enjoyment of traditional music. The first membership in a household includes the *Fiddler's Rag*; additional members sharing the newsletter are steeply discounted. To join, sign up at the jam or see [www.fiddlers.org/join](http://www.fiddlers.org/join).

## Officers and Chairs

President-Trustee .....Richard J. Brooks  
Vice President ..... OPEN  
Treasurer ..... Janet Johnston  
Membership Secretary .....Pete Showman  
Recording Secretary .....Dinah Showman  
Newsletter Editor ..... OPEN (*Pete Showman, acting*)  
Newsletter Publisher ..... Charlotte Prater  
Payout Coordinator ..... Paul Clarke  
Publicity ..... Tom Clausen  
Webmaster .....Pete Showman  
Youth Activity Coordinator .....Mary Kennedy  
Youth Fiddle Contest Chair .....Jaclyn Chiew

## Trustees

Seat 1: Pete Showman      Seat 2: Gorden Gibson  
Seat 3: Paul Clarke      Seat 4: Charlotte Prater  
Seat 5: Dave Williams      Seat 6: Tom Clausen

## To Contact the SCVFA:

Mail: P.O. Box 2666, Cupertino, CA 95015-2666  
Email: president at fiddlers.org Phone: (650) 328-3939

## Newsletter Submissions & Comments:

Email: newsletter at fiddlers.org

Website: [www.scvfa.org](http://www.scvfa.org) or [www.fiddlers.org](http://www.fiddlers.org)

Copyright 2012, Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association

## Trustee Meeting September 23, 2012

The SCVFA Trustees met on September 23, 2012 and took the following actions

- Discussed the upcoming KidFiddle class and the need for publicizing it. Luke Abbott, a well-known musician, will teach it.
- Made plans and approved expenditures for our December Holiday Potluck. MaryAnn Clausen and Lee Clarke will coordinate the event.
- Considered whether preparations for our youth fiddle contest in November are on track and decided to move forward. Jaclyn Chiew has agreed to chair the contest; Pete Showman will assist.
- Appointed a nominating committee to nominate a candidate for trustee; the election will be held in February 2013. Paul Clark has decided not to continue as trustee when his term ends in February. Charlotte Prater, whose term also ends in February, has decided to run again. The nominating committee is Pete Showman, Janet Johnston, and Paul Clarke.
- Considered newsletter logistics now that Mary Larsen has resigned as editor. Pete Showman is temporarily filling in while we seek a new editor.
- Paul Clarke reported on past payouts and an upcoming payout at Prusch Heritage Farm on October 6. There is a list of past payouts and locations on our website.
- Began discussion of possible member benefits and promoting interest in SCVFA.
- Set November 11, 2012 as the tentative date for the next trustee meeting.

Dinah Showman  
Secretary

*Trustee meetings are open to all SCVFA members. They're usually held on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of odd-numbered months, subject to rescheduling to avoid conflicts. If you'd like to attend a meeting contact Richard Brooks: President at fiddlers.org.*

## Paul Clarke Takes 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Senior Div in Fiddletown Fiddle Contest

Most of us know Trustee **Paul Clarke** for playing his several banjos, octave mandolin and so forth. But he's also been studying fiddle for a while now. Paul recently proved he could string those notes together by taking second place in the Senior Division at the **Fiddletown Community Center Fiddle Contest**. Way to go, Paul!



Paul as fiddler



## SCVFA Happenings, cont.

### Calling All Young Fiddlers! Sign Up for our 11<sup>th</sup> annual SCVFA Youth Fiddle Contest November 4, 2012

Young fiddlers, parents, teachers —  
time to sign up for the contest  
and get a couple of tunes ready!  
Be sure to register early: time  
limits us to 25 contestants.

**Everyone** — come cheer  
on these young fiddlers!



Three age divisions:

8 and under, 11 and under, 17 and under.

- Cash prizes for 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> in each division.
- Custom-made fiddle trophies for first place.
- Participant ribbons for all.

Pre-registration is strongly encouraged.

Full details and the entry form are on our  
website: [www.fiddlers.org/contest](http://www.fiddlers.org/contest). Questions?  
Call Pete Showman: (408) 255-0297.

## SCVFA Trustee Nominations

Can you help lead the SCVFA?

Every year in February we elect two of the six Trustees who, with the president they appoint, govern the SCVFA. This year trustee **Charlotte Prater** plans to run again but **Paul Clarke** has decided to step down. Paul has served for 8 years as a trustee, including one year as president-trustee.

Over the next two months the nominating committee appointed by the board will be seeking candidates to run in February. **If you'd like to be considered, contact any member of the committee:** Paul Clarke, Janet Johnston or Pete Showman. (Or if they call you, please consider throwing your hat into the ring!)

The trustee term is normally three years. The main duties are attending board meetings and taking a turn as Jam Manager roughly once every seven months. Trustees also typically volunteer for other minor duties to help keep the association running smoothly.

Board meetings are generally held every other month, for about 3 hours. We usually meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of odd months, but the schedule is flexible to accommodate conflicts. If you would like to be considered as a trustee candidate in the future, please

let one of the committee members know. We will announce the candidates in the January newsletter.

## Open Officer Positions

### Newsletter Editor

As Richard noted last month, Mary Larsen is unable to continue as our editor due to a new job, so we are again seeking a **Newsletter Editor**. The main job is preparing the newsletter each month, using tools of your choice, and sending it as PDF files to the publisher and other board members. The editor usually gathers articles from various sources, and writes some parts of the newsletter as well (such as this page). If you can help, please contact Pete Showman or Richard Brooks.

### Playout Coordinator

Paul Clarke has served SCVFA well for seven years as our Playout Coordinator, managing the performances we do for outside groups. He introduced improvements including organizing the Performances page on our website (which he has offered to continue doing). The remaining duties are to be the contact for organizations who want a performance, arrange performance dates, get performer sign-ups, and arrange for a sound system (ours or theirs).

Paul has made our performances much more professional by including small groups of people who regularly play together, along with those of us who are less organized. Thanks, Paul!

## Playout Saturday, October 6

Speaking of playouts, playout coordinator Paul Clarke has arranged for us to play at a fun-sounding event: the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Harvest Fair and Exposition at **Prusch Farm Park**, near the intersections of U.S. 101, I-280 and I-680. SCVFA volunteers will perform for about an hour from 12 to 1 pm (arrive about 11:40). For details see [fiddlers.org/performances](http://fiddlers.org/performances). To sign up to participate, contact Paul Clarke. You can reach Paul by email at [performances@fiddlers.org](mailto:performances@fiddlers.org).

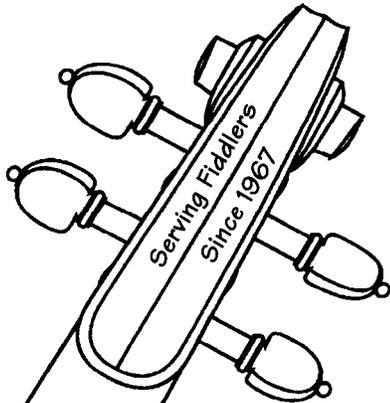
Our outside performances, aka “playouts,” help us achieve part of our mission: to perpetuate traditional music. They also help keep SCVFA in the black financially via the nominal fees that we ask for performing. If you'd like to be added to our list of volunteer performers, contact Paul. No obligation.



# KAMIMOTO

STRING INSTRUMENTS

“Fiddles  
for  
Every Style...”



- New & Old Instruments
- Repairs & Restorations
- One-hour bow rehairing (by appt.)
- Rentals: Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass

Hours: Mon-Sat 10:00 - 5:30

**[408] 298-8168**  
www.kamimotostrings.com

609 North Fourth Street  
San Jose, CA 95112

**[800] 892-3199**

**Fax: [408] 298-8198**

## Teaching a Tune in the Beginners' Circle

by Tom Clausen

Participating in the folk process in traditional music is always fun and can become enjoyably addictive, as it did for a dozen musicians at the SCVFA Beginners' Circle at the September 2nd Jam.

Just two weeks earlier I had attended a music workshop with Mr. Marc Rennard, a famous Missouri fiddler who had been a band-mate of Chip Curry's in Arizona and was visiting California from his home in St. Louis.

Marc introduced us to a piece called *The Snouts and Ears of America*, from the Samuel Bayard collection. It's a great little D tune that Prof. Bayard collected from noted Pennsylvania fiddler Sarah Armstrong in 1943. I thought the Beginners' Circle musicians would enjoy learning it.

More than usual, we were forced to depend on the folk process since I'd forgotten to bring even a single copy of the "flyspecks" (the just slightly pejorative term that backwoods fiddlers use to refer to written notation). As we worked through the tune phrase by phrase it forced me to bring the tune back to memory as best I could, and it forced us all to keep our musical memories as sharp as possible. For those who are used to reading off the page it can be a challenge to learn a new tune from ear alone.

Fortunately Sydney Roberts, one of our new dynamite young fiddlers who had also attended Marc's workshop, was there, and she helped me remember the parts of the tune that had slipped my mind.

It took us awhile to get the phrases put together. Guitar and string bass helped us shape the sound into a full-fledged tune, so within a few minutes we made it sound pretty



Mrs. Sarah (Gray) Armstrong, traditional fiddler of Derry, Pennsylvania.

much like music, and then began working on tone, bowing, and ornaments.

I look forward to playing this tune with my friends at jam sessions in the future and am grateful to Marc for bringing it to us.

I encourage everyone to learn some tunes strictly by listening and working to recreate the sound you hear. This technique helps us to remember that music is sound and tunes are beautiful sounds that become stories. Learning a tune by ear involves hearing the melody mentally along with the rhythm, chord changes, harmony, and bass line. Developing our capacity to learn new tunes can help us to become better musicians while expanding our repertoire.

So, whether you are a beginner, advancing, or an accomplished musician, consider participating in the next Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association's Beginners' Circle. Come and learn a new tune!

See a photo of the Beginner's Circle on page 5. Sydney is second from right.

To help you try learning it by ear, I've posted my recording of Marc Rennard and Chip Curry playing the tune at the workshop. You can find it here: [www.scvfa.org/Tunes/SnoutsAndEarsOfAmerica\\_MarcRennard.mp3](http://www.scvfa.org/Tunes/SnoutsAndEarsOfAmerica_MarcRennard.mp3)  
We'll try to print a transcription of the tune next month. - Pete Showman

# Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association

## Youth Fiddle Contest



November 4, 2012



### At SCVFA's Sunday Afternoon Jam

(Check in 1:00; contest begins 1:45 with 8-and-under division)

at Hoover Middle School  
Naglee Ave. at Park Ave., San Jose

Register early! Due to time constraints a maximum of 25 contestants will be accepted. Additional registrants will be placed on a waiting list.

Three age divisions: 8 and under, 11 and under, and 17 and under.  
Trophies for first place in each division. Cash prizes as follows:

8 and under:	11 and under:	17 and under:
1 <sup>st</sup> Prize \$40	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize \$50	1 <sup>st</sup> Prize \$60
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize \$25	2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize \$35	2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize \$45
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize \$20	3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize \$25	3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize \$35
4 <sup>th</sup> Prize \$15	4 <sup>th</sup> Prize \$20	4 <sup>th</sup> Prize \$25
5 <sup>th</sup> Prize \$10	5 <sup>th</sup> Prize \$15	5 <sup>th</sup> Prize \$20

#### Other Prizes in Each Division

The top five winners will receive winner certificates and place ribbons.  
All participants will receive participation ribbons

**Registration fee \$6 if received by Wed Oct. 31; \$12 afterwards.** Includes one free adult admission for parent, accompanist or any other adult. Additional adult admissions are \$6 for SCVFA members, \$8 for non-members.

For more information contact Pete Showman at (408) 255-0297, or [ContestInfo12 at scvfa.org](mailto:ContestInfo12@scvfa.org). See the SCVFA web site, [www.fiddlers.org/contest](http://www.fiddlers.org/contest) for information and the registration form.

Contestants are to play two tunes: one tune in a traditional fiddle style and one tune of player's choice.

The playing time for the two tunes should be no more than four minutes total.

Each contestant may have up to two accompanists, who may not play the melody.

# SCVFA Youth Fiddle Contest

## Sunday November 4, 2012

The **Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association** is holding a **Youth Fiddle Contest** to encourage the playing of traditional fiddle music by young people. The contest will be held November 4, 2012 at the monthly SCVFA Jam. **Location:** Hoover Middle School, 1635 Park Ave. (entrance on Naglee Ave.) in San Jose (*see [www.fiddlers.org](http://www.fiddlers.org)*). **Schedule:** Check-in 1:00-1:30, Division 1 starts at approximately 1:45pm; awards ceremony approx. 4:30-5.

**Summary of the rules:** (*For the official rules, download the contest information packet from [fiddlers.org/contest](http://fiddlers.org/contest)*.)

- Three Divisions by age: **Div 1:** 8 and under; **Div 2:** 11 and under; **Div 3:** 17 and under.
- Each contestant plays two tunes: one fiddle tune and one tune of player's choice, up to 4 minutes combined.
- Each contestant may have up to two accompanists, who may not play the melody. (Call if you need one.)
- Scoring will be based equally on rhythm, intonation & tone quality, style, and difficulty (25% each).
- Only one round is scheduled. At the sole discretion of the Contest Chairman, ties based on total points may be resolved by analyzing the judges' detailed scoring, or a playoff may used (the tied contestants may play the same tunes as in the regular round), or duplicate prizes may be awarded.

Due to time limitations, **the contest is limited to 25 contestants**, with 5 spots reserved for each division until the early-registration deadline. Entrants beyond that will be wait-listed. Register early to reserve your place!

**To Register in Advance:** fill in the registration form below, and deliver it with your entry fee:

- By mail: SCVFA, P.O. Box 2666, Cupertino, CA 95015-2666. Make checks payable to SCVFA.
- By hand: Bring it to the regular October 7th SCVFA jam, 1-5pm at Hoover School (contest location).

**Early Registration Fee: \$6** for payments received by Wednesday October 31, 2012.

**After October 31, the registration fee will be \$12** (you can register on site at the contest if space is available).

Registration fee includes one Adult Admission Pass (\$6-\$8 value). Bring a parent, accompanist or friend for free!

**Check-in** for registered contestants and **on-site registration** is from 1:00-1:30. You must check in and get a number, even if you have registered. Entrants who have not checked in by 1:30 may be moved to the wait-list.

**Admission:** Adults SCVFA memb. \$6, non-memb. \$8 (or free with Adult Pass). Children 17 and under are free.

*Questions or problems? Email or call Pete Showman: ContestInfo12 at [fiddlers.org](http://fiddlers.org), (408) 255-0297.*

### Registration Form - SCVFA Youth Fiddle Contest 2012

Contestant's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ (years,

- |   |   |                    |
|---|---|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Division 1: 8 and under  | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>We hope to make a video of the contest.</i> | as of Nov 4, 2012) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Division 2: 11 and under | <i>Check here if you do <u>not</u> want this entrant included.</i>      |                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Division 3: 17 and under |   |                    |

Parent or Guardian Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.(s) (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ day/eve?

Email(s) (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to be notified by email about future SCVFA youth activities?  Yes  No

Tunes you will play\* \_\_\_\_\_

*\* The tunes can be changed; just let us know by the time you check in at the contest*

Fiddle Teacher's name: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about the contest? \_\_\_\_\_

9/9/12-r1

# Photos from the September 2012 Jam



Richard Brooks photo

Above; A very successful Beginners' Circle, led by Tom Clausen (left of center in broad-brimmed hat). Paul Clarke (see p. 2) is standing next to Tom, ready to play another tune.

Right (L-R):  
Norio Kawato,  
Sam Morocco  
and  
Mark Llewellyn  
play for the  
audience..



Richard Brooks photo

Below: Triple Fiddlers Entertain.  
(L-R) Norio Kawato,  
Jack Sadler, Sam Morocco,  
Arthur Kee, Nancy Solomon  
and Jim True.



Richard Brooks photo

Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association  
P.O. Box 2666  
Cupertino, CA 95015-2666

**Next Jam: Sunday Oct 7, 1-5 pm,  
Hoover Middle School.  
Luke Abbott KidFiddle and 'bout Time**

**Youth Fiddle  
Contest  
Entry Form  
Inside**

Damaged or Missing Issue? Call us,  
or email to: newsletter at scvfa.org



Dennis Gale photo

L-R: Chris Rogers, Richard Brooks, Sam Morocco, Grace Clark and Alex Mayers entertain at the September 2012 SCVFA Jam