



Fiddler's Rag

Vol. 42, Number 12
Celebrating 41 years

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

December 2014
Next Jam: Dec. 7



President's Note

Our 13th Youth Fiddle Contest was a huge success with 23 contestants and over 120 attendees. We can thank Pete and Dinah Showman for making it possible.

Warren Campbell led our very successful Beginners Circle. Thank you Warren!

December Holiday Potluck

December is our annual holiday potluck dinner. Door admission is \$5 for everyone. For those not bringing a dish to share, enjoy the meal for an additional \$5.

A Real Slow Jam and a Beginners Circle

Topher Heath will coordinate a *real* slow jam for beginning to advanced beginners who can play chords at a steady rhythm pace by vamping or chopping. It is in addition to our usual Beginners Circle. See page 2.

Sign Up to Help with Storage Locker Transport

Please sign up at the desk to help take our storage locker supplies to the jam. We need one person to help a trustee. Two cars with trunk space will do it. It is a mile drive to our jam and takes 15 to 20 minutes to load.

Clarify First-Time Visitors FREE Door Admission

The free door admission from January through June 2015 for first-time visitors accompanied by a member does not apply to our March 1 jam when we are having Blaine Sprouse, a famous bluegrass fiddler, as our guest performer and workshop instructor. Details will follow.

Donate CDs for our Door Prize

Donate a CD you don't need for our door prize winners.

Share Your Photos

Share your photos and we will include your name if they are used in the Rag. Email them to the editor (currently Pete Showman) at newsletter at fiddlers.org.

Amazon Buyers

On the lower left side of our www.fiddlers.org website we have a link to Amazon. If you click on it to go to Amazon, we get a small commission if you make a purchase. It costs you nothing and it really helps us.

- Richard Brooks



Join us for the SCVFA Holiday Potluck Sunday, December 7

- Jamming and stage performances from 1-3 PM
- Potluck Dinner starts at 3 PM

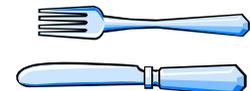
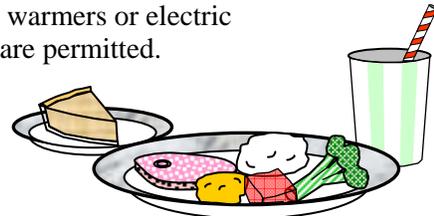
Please bring lots of side dishes and a few desserts. The SCVFA will provide turkey, ham, beverages, eating utensils and decorations.

Bring one dish to feed four times as many as are in your group. So if you come alone, bring enough for four people. If you come as a couple, bring enough for 8. Please bring your own serving utensils and tape your name on your serving dishes so we know who they belong to.

Can't bring a dish? Come anyway, and enjoy a meal for just \$5.

Note: We do not have permission to use the kitchen facilities (kitchen sinks or electrical outlets).

No food warmers or electric utensils are permitted.



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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.

Officers and Chairs

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| President-Trustee ... | Richard J. Brooks | Newsletter Publisher .. | Charlotte Prater |
| Vice President | OPEN | Performances Contact .. | Dave Williams |
| Recording Secretary | Dinah Showman | Publicity | OPEN |
| Treasurer | Janet Johnston | Webmaster | Pete Showman |
| Membership Secretary | Pete Showman | Youth Programs Chair | OPEN |
| News Editor | OPEN (<i>Pete Showman, act.</i>) | Youth Fiddle Contest | Pete Showman |

Trustees

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Seat 1: Pete Showman | Seat 3: George Bradshaw | Seat 5: Dave Williams |
| Seat 2: Élan Alford | Seat 4: Charlotte Prater | Seat 6: Susan Goodis |

To Contact the SCVFA:

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

Newsletter Submissions & Comments:

Email: newsletter at fiddlers.org

Website: www.scvfa.org or www.fiddlers.org
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Slow(er) Beginners' Circle / Slow Jam in Dec.

Our Beginners' Circle has been popular with beginning and intermediate musicians. But as more intermediate-level participants have joined, we've heard from some beginners that it's not as slow as they'd like.

Topher Heath has offered to organize a **new slower jam**, "limited to 60-90 beats per minute" depending on the tune. Like the original Beginners' Circle, the aim will be more on slowly playing tunes suggested by the participants than on teaching new tunes. As an aid to help those participants who wish to prepare, Topher plans to take suggestions each month for the next month's tunes, and we will try to publicize these in advance in the Fiddler's Rag, and/or on our website. December's tunes haven't been chosen yet, but we've received two suggestions: *The Girl I Left Behind Me* and *Frosty the Snowman*.

If you would like to learn more or have suggestions for this new slow jam you can email Topher: topher.heath at xxxxxxxx.

We also plan to continue holding a jam or workshop like the current Beginners' Circle, with a focus on learning tunes and building repertoire as well as providing an opportunity to play with others at moderate speed, aimed at beginning-intermediate and intermediate-level players.

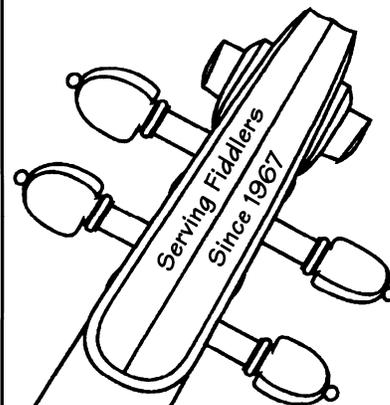
We're still working on the names, but it seems to me the new slower jam should be called something like the "Beginners' Circle Slow Jam," with a new name for the somewhat faster, tune-learning group.

General suggestions for how to conduct or what to call both groups should be directed to Richard Brooks (president at fiddlers.org) and/or to Pete Showman (membership at fiddlers.org or newsletter at fiddlers.org)

- Pete Showman

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SCVFA Happenings

Successful Youth Fiddle Contest

The 2014 Youth Fiddle Contest was a great success, thanks to our 23 contestants, their parents and teachers, and to all the people who helped make it happen, including registrars and scorekeepers Allan French, Dinah Showman and Eric Berseth; judges Dave Barton, Richard Brooks, Tom Clausen, Arthur Kee, Sam Morocco; MC MaryAnn Clausen; Trophies, Tom Clausen and Mike Johnson; Cashier/ Treasurer Janet Johnston; accompanists Luke Abbott and Norio Kawato; jam manager and membership desk staff Élan Alford, and greeter, stage manager, shepherd and general helpers Patti Bossert, George Bradshaw, Susan Goodis and Matt Mathis, and contest chairman Pete Showman.

Nominations for the Feb. 1 Trustee Election

Per the SCVFA Bylaws, two Trustee positions are up for re-election each year, with two members in good standing elected to the two positions at the annual membership meeting, normally held during the February jam. The bylaws also specify that the incumbents whose seats are up for re-election are automatically nominated to run again, unless they withdraw their names.

The 2015 election will be at the February 1 jam; seats 5 and 6 are up for re-election. The current incumbents, **Dave Williams** and **Susan Goodis** respectively, have agreed to run again, so they are the Board's nominees. We'll have more information about them in the January Fiddler's Rag.

The Bylaws also permit nominations by written petition signed by at least 3 members in good standing (dues paid up), submitted along with a written statement from the nominee (who must also be a member in good standing as of the election) agreeing to run, submitted to the President (Richard Brooks) or Secretary (Dinah Showman) by 24 days before the election, i.e. by January 8, 2015. Such nominations may be mailed to the SCVFA mailing address on page 2, postmarked by the above date. In addition, any such additional nominations from the membership that are received by 45 days before the election, i.e. December 18, 2014, will be listed in the January issue of the newsletter along with board-nominated candidate. *(But the Editor would appreciate a few more days' notice. Thank you.)*

Trustee Meeting Highlights

The SCVFA Board of Trustees met on November 8, 2014. The Trustees

- Made plans for the Holiday Potluck at our December jam.
- Heard report of the nominating committee that trustees Dave Williams and Susan Goodis, whose seats (5 and 6) are up for election in February, have decided to run again, and thus are nominated. They will provide statements about themselves for the January newsletter. The election will be held at the SCVFA annual meeting at the February jam.
- Authorized hosting well-known fiddler Blaine Sprouse for a one-hour concert and a separate workshop at our March 2015 jam, and set an increased admission fee for the jam (and concert).
- Agreed to try using a signup list for people to volunteer to assist the trustees in transporting our PA equipment to and from the storage locker to the jam each month.
- Agreed to try splitting the beginners' circle jam into a very slow jam and an intermediate jam in which tunes will be taught.
- Heard a report on November's Youth Fiddle Contest, which was a success with 23 contestants.
- Discussed ways to get young adults and families involved.
- Agreed that our test program January through June 2015 of offering free admission to jams for first time attendees coming with a member will not be offered at the March jam, due to the concert.
- Set January 18, 2015 as the proposed date for the next trustee meeting.

Dinah Showman, Secretary

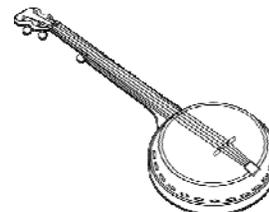
Trustee meetings are open to all SCVFA members. They are usually held on 3rd Sundays of odd-numbered months (subject to change due to conflicts). If you'd like to attend a meeting, contact Richard Brooks: president at fiddlers.org.

Lost and Found ...

... at a recent jam (likely either the October jam and band reunion, or the November jam and contest):

A blue handled sharp knife, "Picnic Time Stainless"

Check with the staff at the back table if it's yours.



Remembering Pat Cooksey

By Sarah Kirton

The fiddling and folk community recently lost a friend and enthusiastic fiddler. On Saturday, Nov. 15, Pat Cooksey-Schery succumbed to pancreatic cancer. She was a member of the San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers and the SCVFA, and a regular at the Monday night old-time jam at Fandango Pizza in Palo Alto. She was a retired teacher of math and sciences.



I first met her about 5 years ago when she began to attend a Scandinavian fiddle group, meeting in Los Altos, to which I have ties. About the same time, she began coming to the old-time jam at Fandango. I learned that she was quite active in the Scottish fiddling community, and regularly took part in their concerts and local tours. She worked hard at learning the old-time repertoire and style, and was a regular attendee until sometime last spring. I also discovered

she was an avid tennis player, and even took part in tournaments for those over 65. She enjoyed hiking, made regular trips to the desert southwest with her husband, and had close ties and regular visits with her extended family. I'll certainly miss her sparkling intelligence, her curiosity, her enthusiasm, and most of all, her kindness to all.

But perhaps the most telling way to explain our loss is to include this, written by Élan Alford, with suggestions from Dorian Martinka, Patti Bossert, and Susan Goodis.

“Pat always had a quiet smile and the kind of patient grace that comes from a peaceful mind. A grin would flash across her face and her eyes would sparkle after playing a rousing tune at the Monday night Fandango jam. Sometimes she held a black carbon fiber fiddle and would play with long bow strokes. Pat was the kind of wistful fiddler who would often say that we should play tunes a little longer. She had a coaxing way with beginners and insisted on hearing the cacophonous sound rather than a muted fiddle voice. You couldn't help but smile with her when she caught your eye. We will miss you, Pat; keep fiddling on.”

Page 7 has a transcription of *Spotted Pony*, a tune that Pat often chose at the Fandango jams – Pete Showman.

Photos from the November Jam and Youth Fiddle Contest



Pete Showman photo

A few of our many helpers

Top, L-R: **Élan Alford** and **Janet Johnston**, Membership Desk and Cashier.

Left: Stage Manager **Matt Mathis** preparing to adjust contestants' microphones.

Right: MC / Announcer **Mary Ann Clausen** keeps the audience informed.



Richard Brooks photo



Tom Clausen photo

Photos from the 2014 Youth Fiddle Contest



Tom Clausen photo

Our Judges: Above, **Sam Morocco, Arthur Kee** and **Richard Brooks** judged Division 1. Below, **Dave Barton, Arthur Kee** and **Tom Clausen** judged Division 3. Sam, Arthur and Tom judged Division 2, the largest. Below, the **fiddle trophies** that are awarded for first place in each division.



Richard Brooks photo



Pete Showman photo



Richard Brooks photo

A large audience was on hand to cheer the contestants on.

2014 SCVFA Youth Fiddle Contest: The Contestants

The contestants receive their participation awards. Photos by Matt Mathis.



Pete Showman and Richard Brooks with Division 1: Matteo Quale, Niko Quale, Caedmon Dickson and Veronica Day Palermo (absent: Thomas Fairfield)



Division 2: Ruksana Varma, Frances West, Katelyn Wong, Lauren Snow, Tessa Schwartz, Miles Quale, Khushi Parikh, Rebecca Jaworski, Lilly Haugaard, Ray Evans, Doniella Dumont and Ethan Dickson.



Pete and Richard with Division 3: Gilford Ting, Kaushik Shivakumar, Edward Ross, Emma Pegler, Helen Ludé and Elvin Hsieh

Key: D major
♩ = 90

Spotted Pony

Traditional
Arr. Pete Showman

A
D A D G D A

5 D A D G D 1 D A D 2 D A D

B
9 D G D A

13 D (Bm) G D 1 A D 2 A D (to repeat)

Spotted Pony is a tune Pat Cooksey often called at the Monday night old-time jam.

* The first and second endings of part A show a couple of possible variations.
The leading notes and slides leading into each line are also optional variations.
Try other variations too, e.g. measure 4 could be played like this:

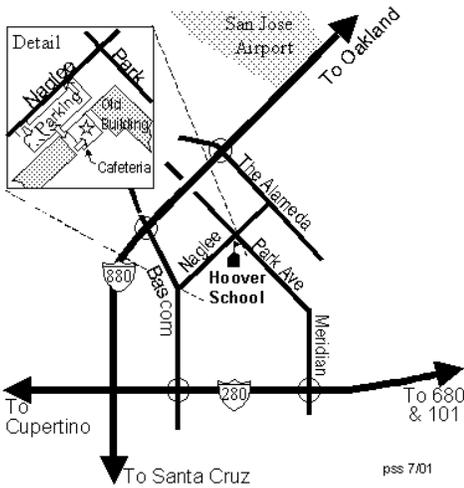
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Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association
P.O. Box 2666
Cupertino, CA 95015-2666

SCVFA Jam on the first Sunday of each month.
Location: Hoover Middle School, 1635 Park Ave.,
San Jose. The school is at the corner of Naglee and
Park. Cafeteria parking is on the Naglee side.

**Next Jam: Sunday Dec. 7, 1-5 pm
at Hoover. Holiday Potluck at 3 pm.**

**Damaged or Missing Issue? Call us,
or email to: [newsletter at scvfa.org](mailto:newsletter@scvfa.org)**



Richard Brooks photo

Warren Campbell (foreground right, in hat) led the November Beginners' Circle. Warren taught some of his native Cape Breton tunes. Everyone looks very happy!