

Presidents Message

I can find no words of wisdom, and I apologize in advance if this ends up sounding like an ad for the Fiddle Family Reunion, but there is little other news in the fiddle world. Most districts have completely shut down their activities, and all contests/festivals of which I am aware are also at a minimum postponed until 2021. The CSOTFA Board of Directors will be having a virtual meeting when it can be scheduled, and we will certainly let you know about any pertinent information coming from that meeting. On a personal note, we here in the north state are breathing smoky air like most of you, but otherwise we are keeping on keeping on. Tex's son and daughter-inlaw were not as fortunate, as they lost their home in Berry Creek. They escaped with their dog, cat, and parrot, and very little else, so prayers and good wishes for them are greatly appreciated.

Now, on to what we hope passes for good news.... First, we regretfully must announce that the 2020 Western Open Fiddle Championships has been canceled (for a variety of reasons, and you can call me for more details if you like.) The GOOD news is we have decided to replace that with a much-less-formal event we are calling the Fiddle Family Reunion held at the Red Bluff Elks Lodge, October 22-24. Tehama County "advanced" from purple to red last week, and our County Health Officer is cautiously optimistic that we will continue to improve. The Elks Lodge is open, so we are proceeding..... Briefly, the Fiddle Family Reunion will give an opportunity for our music-starved Fiddle Family to come together to share some music. There is plenty of room--inside and out-- for musicians to "socially distance" if they so choose. Thursday night we plan to hold our Gospel Sing-along. On Friday and Saturday, there will be a few informal competitions, such as: Waltz Contest; Hot Fiddle Contest; Anything Goes; and one or two divisions of a Gambler's Draw. Other than that, we're all about just providing the opportunity and location for sharing some music. We have RV hookups with electric, water, and a dump station on site, and plenty of room for dry camping. Please keep an eye out on the Western Open website for more information.

I want to give a big thank you to Cathy Agnew for continuing to publish the Soundpost. She is a rock star!! I hope this finds all of you safe and well, and looking forward to when we can meet again.





Fiddler Video's

Lyle Dixson

I'd like to put together some short (10 Minute) videos to highlight some of CSOTFA's long time members. But I need help from members to provide historical background on the person, photos, etc.



Willie Randel, District 7

Up first I'd like to do Willie Randel, if not for any other reason other than I have some material to work with on hand. But I need more.

Here is my first jab at this project. This should not be kept secret from the subject... if anything their input would be invaluable.

Here is the link to the finalized, publicly viewable video telling Willie Randel's Fiddle Story. Thanks to Dan Touchstone for providing some District 7 documents that were used to help create the dialog.

2020 Willie Randel Fiddle Story - California State Old Time Fiddlers Association

https://youtu.be/RbvsaFDiE6E

Play list of some of the videos from CSOTFA districts or members. You can publish this one. https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4 mHurdjsemljZSezZ5e55LAaICKnywKe

Lyle Dixson

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

State Officers

President: Sharon Barrett- texshar@pacbell.net V. Pres. : Kathy Kampschmidt - kdkampy@sbcglobal.net 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:

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: Dan Touchstone-dtouchstonefiddler@gmail.com District 8: Pat Cronin -sympaticomusic.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 Sunday, 1:00 - 3:00 Open Circle Jam, 3:00 Board Meeting St. James Lutheran Church 2500 Shasta View Blvd. Redding ;3rd Sunday, 1:00 Workshop & Jam, 2:00-4:00 Open Mic Palo Cedro Community Hall, 22037 Old Forty-Four Drive 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.



Received this email from Mary Rose Preston "Great I just spent an hour looking through all my jokes!! Below are some feel free to use any, or none." Hope they give you a chuckle. Thanks Mary Rose

The worst club I've ever been in was called The Fiddle. It was a vile inn

Coda - a fish-a served with chipsa

Tonic - a pick-me-up

Crotchet - knitting

Quaver - the feeling before a lesson when you haven't practiced

Key signature - silly things put there to frighten you (ignore them, they will go away, and so will your audience)

Flats - English apartments

Improvisation - what you do when the music falls down

Scales - fishy things

A group of chaps, all age 40, discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at the local Wetherspoon's because the waitresses had big bosoms and wore mini-skirts.

Ten years later, at age 50, the friends once again discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at the local Wetherspoon's because the food and the service were good and the beer was excellent.

Ten years later, at age 60, the friends again discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at the local Wetherspoon's because they could dine in peace and 8) So, after this quarantine.....will the producers of quiet and it was good value for money.

Ten years later, at age 70, the friends discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at the local Wetherspoon's because the restaurant was wheelchair accessible and had a lift for the disabled.

Ten years later, at age 80, the friends discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at the local Wetherspoon's because they had never been there before.

Day 1 of Home school: Two students have been suspended for fighting. One has been expelled and a teacher has been fired for drinking on the job.

I just asked a six-year-old if he understands why there is no school. He said yes, because they are out of toilet paper..

The Corona virus has done what no woman has been able to do...cancel all sports, shut down all bars and keep men at home.

Day 7 of the quarantine--I was bored so I started checking out all of your profiles. I just wanted you to know that some of you'all have the same boyfriend.

1) Half of us are going to come out of quarantine as amazing cooks; the other half will come out with a drinking problem.

2) I used to spin that toilet paper like I was on Wheel of Fortune. Now I turn it as if I'm cracking a safe.

3) I need to practice social distancing from the refrigerator.

4) PSA: every few days try on your jeans just to make sure they fit. Pajamas will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.

5) I don't think anyone expected that when we changed the clocks we'd go from Standard Time to the Twilight Zone.

6) This morning I saw a neighbor talking to her cat. It was obvious she thought her cat understood her. I came into my house, told my dog ...we laughed a lot.

7) Breaking News: Wearing a mask inside your home is now highly recommended. Not so much to stop COVID-19, but to stop eating.

My 600 Pound Life just find me or do I find them?

FYI: Many of us know Zeke who was the contest coordinator of the last 3 state contests that were held in Oroville.

Mary Preston advised us : "I have been in contact with Zeke and she is (they are) fine. No longer in the path of the fire"



Miss Gayel isn't letting the quarantine discourage her or keep her from helping her students. You go girl!!!

District 3, which is housed in Tehachapi, canceled its 44th annual Fiddlin' Down the Tracks fiddle contest for this year. But that does not mean we are not playing music together. Country singer/songwriter/guitarist Ron Blair, who is a frequent winner in the Band Scramble at Fiddlin' Down the Tracks, has been pairing up with his Fiddler friend Gayel Pitchford and playing for small back yard gatherings of friends—masked and distanced, of course. It started as one performance at Gayel's house, where they were joined by Dist. 3 Fiddler Lisa Rosas, who was visiting from Hanford, and then some one who was there asked them to play at a small party and in a couple weeks they will be playing for yet another small party.

As for the fiddlin' kids, a number of them have been playing as Special Music at some of the local churches, most of which are meeting outside now. Fiddler Joy Robb and cello-fiddler Rebecca Carol have both performed to lots of applause at Tehachapi United Methodist Church.

Most of the Dist. 3 fiddlers can also read music, and as often happens in small towns, they are double-hatted as players in both the Tehachapi Strings Orchestra and the Tehachapi Symphony. The Symphony resumed rehearsals in July; it felt really weird to be distanced all around the room and even more weird to have a mask on, but practice we did. The Symphony will be presenting a concert this coming Sunday, September 13, which will be outdoors AND masked and distanced, both orchestra and audience. If this experiment of making music in the time of Virus works and there is no spread, this may well become the new normal.

All the musicians were happy to be playing again, and the Board was glad to get the orchestra going again before we lost too many players and concert attendees. Fiddlers who play in the Tehachapi Symphony include Cello-Fiddlers Johnnie Batistessa and Rebecca Carol, Fiddler/Violist Everett Hamilton, Bass Fiddler Natalie Whiteside, and Violin Fiddlers Joy Robb, Emily Hamilton, Miriam Berglund, B.J. Zheng, Joe Wallek, and Gayel Pitchford.

As for fiddle instruction and/or lessons, Gayel Pitchford kept teaching those few students who chose to keep coming for lessons about 8 of them. As people realized that with their careful life styles they were not catching the virus, students started coming back and she now has about 15 students. She is not taking ANY new students unless they are people who are well known to her already, so she knows they will not risk their own health or hers. She has started one new violin and one new bass player this week. As soon as Pitchford realized that some students would keep coming, she started an evening of playing music at her house on Monday nights—string quartets and other things depending on which players showed up. The group is growing and having a lot of fun. Last Monday they played Borodin and Duke Ellington!! Other weeks have included beautiful waltzes, Scott Joplin rags, classical Jigs (called Gigues) by Bach and Handel. Pitchford is trying hard to boost everyone's sight reading skill and expose them to all different kinds of music.

Fiddler Sarah Frias, who won the Howdy Forrester scholarship in 2018 is back at the Master's College in Santa Clarita, where she is majoring in Music Education. She is both a Violin Fiddler and a Tenor Sax Fiddler. She actually won a medal at the 2019 Fiddlin' Down the Tracks contest with her Sax rendition of Texas Schottische.

Fiddler Joseph Wallek got a summer Intern job at Virgin Galactic (aerospace) in Mojave. Over a thousand young people applied and fewer than a hundred were chosen for Internships.



Kudos to Joe!! I have always wondered if playing the fiddle makes you smarter, or if smart people just choose to play the fiddle...in any event Joe, who won the Grand Championship at the 2019 Fiddlin' Down the Tracks, is one smart cookie. (He also won the Howdy Forrester Scholarship in 2019 and the Tehachapi Symphony's 2018 Young Artist Competition.)

So you can see, we are using "cross over" to keep our fiddlers energized and playing and we are working to build lots of new skills during this time.



Rebecca Carol, cello-fiddler, playing for the Methodist Church 2 weeks ago. Her performance was so good, that I got two new students from our congregation who want to learn to play.

District 6

The Western Open Fiddle Championships is proud to host a

appropriate to hold the 38th Annual Western Open Fiddle Championships this year. At the same time, we see an opportunity to bring our Fiddle Family together for some desperately needed camaraderie and sharing of our beloved music. The Elks Lodge has spacious areas outside and many "nooks and crannies" inside where people can meet and mingle. We are planning several fun events such as:

We have reluctantly come to the conclusion that it would not be

Red Bluff CA Elks Lodge

335 Gilmore Road

Gospel Singalong-Hot Fiddle Contest-Waltz Contest-- Anything Goes-- and Gambler's Draw divisions.

There will be no Admission charged, and any prize money will be contingent on the number of contestants entering a particular event. The Elks Lodge will be preparing lunches and dinners for purchase and camping is available for \$5 per night dry camping or a limited number of \$15 per night for electric and water hook-ups (call us for reservations.) If you RSVP by October 1, you may purchase a Fiddle Family Reunion t-shirt for only \$5!

For more information, please contact us at: texshar@pacbell.net 530-604-5279 530-527-6127 www.WesternOpenFiddle.com

* We will, of course, be following guidelines for safely holding this event.



Hello, District 4 Fiddlers! We have not been able to meet, as our meeting place is a city-owned building and is still closed. We are hopeful for October, but may be delayed until November. Several of our members have been meeting up in tiny groups and a few have been utilizing zoom. Kudos for keeping the music going. :-) Hope you are all well and looking forward to meeting up again and sharing music and friendship!



As September is quickly turning into October, we are still unable to have our monthly fiddle jams at the Orangevale Grange. Is anyone else missing those meetings and jams? I know I sure am. Hopefully we can get back on track, but it looks like we might be in isolation for quite a while. For those of you with school age children (or many of us Grandparents) our kids are using the Chrome notebooks and attending school at home with their online teachers. On top of the corona virus, I'm sure many of us have been forced inside by the nasty smoky air quality lately...hoping none of our members have suffered losses in the many area fires.

As for fiddling activities, Eric Anderson is playing some gigs with The Cripple Creek Band. They played Saturday, Sept.12, at the Mineshaft in Rancho Cordova. A different kind of crowd these days...people park their vehicles by the stage to watch the concert, and get the music piped into their FM radios. Eric will be playing another similar show in Auburn at the Gold Country Fairgrounds on Saturday, Sept. 19, with a second band, American Mile.

Eric Anderson gives lessons on Zoom now. If you want to improve your playing, please contact him. I have been taking lessons from him during this pandemic, and have learned a lot of fiddling as well as fiddle guitar backup. For some good fiddling during our isolation, I recommend watching the Farnum Family, a brother and sister act. They have a weekly program called Fiddling Fridays, and play a wide variety of great fiddle tunes...you can find them on Facebook.

That's all I have for this month. Please keep fiddling and playing... and stay safe until we can get together again. Thanks! District 5 President in exile, Jeff Gebhart.



District 8 has suspended all activities, jam sessions and gatherings in Oakview for the rest of 2020.

SUS COREZ will be stepping down as our president at the end of 2020 but will assist in member correspondence in 2021.

Pat Cronin will be attending the Family Fiddle/Song-along Festival in Redding. I will drive up on Wednesday 10-21-2020 and check out Sunday, 1025. I will be bringing up a 34' motorhome. DISTRICT 8 WILL DONATE \$200 TO THIS EVENT.

As far as other stuff for District 8 there is not much to report. We are still holding board meetings and some of us are gathering individually in small groups to play music but we all miss each other!

As for me personally, I am reading books on the Carter Family, Jean Ritchie, and Bill Monroe. I am studying weekly voice lessons on Zoom sessions with Susie Glaze of Susie Glaze and the Newfolk Ensemble. In March, just as the Covid Virus came out I produced a 13 song CD with Bob Bueling, which is currently being released on CDBaby, ITunes and numerous streaming sites. I am also painting a series of custom art designs on Palm Fronds which I am selling to pay for future CD productions.



Greetings to All from District 9!

All District 9 activities are on hiatus until pandemic risks have clearly passed.

We are observing the stay at home/quarantine directives to keep our members safe. And we are using our Bay Strings news letter as a way to keep in touch with our membership.

Everyone stay safe, be positive, and test negative. Learn some new tunes. Keep the music flowing.

Membership Report

Charley Oveland

MEMBERSHIP REPORT UPDATE – August 2020

April 2020

August 2020

	Αμπ 2020	August 2020		
District 1 – Total	78			
HOH - 58	Spouses - 16	Children – 4	78	
District 3 – Total	50			
HOH – 29	Spouses - 10	Children – 11	50	
District 4 – Total	35			
HOH – 24	Spouses – 10	Children – 1	35	
District 5 – Total	113			
HOH – 58	Spouses – 25	Children – 13	96	
District 6 – Total	106			
	Spouses – 21	Children – 17	90	
District 7 – Total	62			
	Spouses – 14	Children – 3	56	
District 8 – Total	117			
	Spouses – 37	Children – 4	116	
District – 9 Total HOH – 51	80 Spouses – 23	Children – 6	80	
District 10 – Total	104			
HOH – 62	Spouses – 20	Children – 17	99	
April Totals - Total - 745				
)H - 448 Spouses -	176 Children - 76	Total - 700	

District 10



If you want to listen to some Bluegrass Music, Mark Hogan is the announcer for a program called Bluegrass From Sympathy Valley on the radio on Monday nights from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at **KOWSFM.com** on your computer. It features Bluegrass, old time cowboys and cowboy poetry

KINDNESS

One of the greatest gifts you can bestow upon another. If someone is in need, lend them a helping hand. Do not wait for a thank you. True kindness lies within the act of giving without the expectation of something in return.

Pieces of Soul

Don't be a Monkey



Wear your Mask

Raynetta Ruth Huffman Feb. 3, 1923 - Aug. 8, 2020

"Lady Rae"

Many of our senior members will remember Mrs. Rae Huffman. She devoted many years to CSOTFA. She and her husband Ross, both held numerous positions in District 8 as well as in the state organization. We all called her "Lady Rae". A title that described her perfectly. Lady Rae was playing her fiddle at a jam in her front yard two days before she had her stroke. That's the fiddler she was....playing music to the end with her friends. So many people will miss this lovely lady but she left a beautiful legacy.

Raynetta "Rae' Ruth Huffman, a "Native Daughter", was born in Redlands, California. She had 3 sisters and one brother (all deceased). She is survived by two children, Kathy Rae Huffman, Oxnard, and Jim Huffman, White Plains, MD. She has a granddaughter, one grandson, 8 great grandchildren and 3 great great-grandchildren.

Rae began playing the violin when she was 10 years old. She studied classical music in school and performed in numerous orchestras in her younger years.

When she was 17 (and a senior in high school) she eloped and secretly married her 19-year-old, long-time sweetheart Ross Huffman. Ross joined the US Navy in 1941 and was part of the WWII North African campaign. Upon his discharge, he worked for



the Huffman family orange growing business in Redlands, on site in a 100-yearold drafty farmhouse. Both Ross and Rae were members (and past presidents) of the American Legion Post 107 in Redlands. A Navy Reservist, Ross was recalled into active duty in 1952, and became part of the Seabees Mobile Construction Battalion in Port Hueneme, California. Among other places, the Huffman's spent 6 years in San Diego and 3 years at in Japan where Ross was stationed at the Atsugi Naval Air Station and the family lived in Yokohama. The Huffman's returned to Oxnard in early 1964, where Ross, at one time Command Master Chief at the Port Hueneme base, remained on active duty until he retired in 1971.

1963 Kamakura Japan



Sept 1945, Jack Dempsey's NYC on VJ Day



When Ross was deployed to Vietnam in 1966, Rae decided it was a good time for her to realize a dream. She attended Ventura College, passed her state board exams, and became a licensed Registered Nurse in 1970. She continued to maintain her license into her early 90's, which required completing 30 units of continued education every two years (not an easy task especially considering her age).

Rae and Ross joined the Old Time Fiddler's District 8 in 1977. This is when she learned to play "old time fiddle" style music. Fiddle contests became a big part of their life. Over the years, Rae & Ross both held numerous positions in Dist. 8 and in the State Old Time Fiddlers organization. After Ross retired, the Huffman's traveled in their motorhome around the USA, mostly to attend fiddle contests or fiddle camp outs.

Ross died in 1995, but during their 55 years of marriage, music was always a central focus. Rae won many trophies during her contest years but the one she was most proud of was the 1979 State Championship trophy. Rae and Marvin Johnson also won a State Twin Fiddle Championship in 1983. Rae was a certified California State Judge. Rae loved the Fiddle Contests at District 8. She always encouraged the fiddle kids and enjoyed watching these kids grow up. What most people never knew, however well she played, or how many times she was in a contestant, for all gigs she played, Rae was always extremely nervous before performing!

Rae was a Lifetime Member of the California State Old Time Fiddlers and the first Lifetime Member of the Old Time Country Bluegrass Gospel Music Association. (OTCBGMA)

It would be impossible to count how many times over her lifetime that Rae had played at jams, at community events, for veterans, for seniors, for friends. Even when she was dealing with her own health issues she never said no when asked to play somewhere. Lady Rae was the focal musician at our OTCBGMA shows. She always opened the show. Rae was the main reason this association was started, so that she would have a place to play among friends and an audience. She has touched the lives of so many people. She brought a smile to the faces of everyone who heard her play. Our lives will never be the same without Lady Rae's music and friendship. Our organization, our band, our lives will always have an empty spot where she used to be. But she left a beautiful legacy and we will forever remember our Lady Rae.

Rest in Peace Lady Rae.

Huffman Award



The Huffman Award is a perpetual trophy that is awarded every year at the state fiddle contest to a deserving individual. There is a Huffman Award at the state level and a Huffman award at the District 8 level.

This award was initiated in 1984 by Ross and Rae Huffman to recognize an individual or couple who have demonstrated exemplary service to the CSOTFA organization. It is a distinguished honor to be recognized with this trophy. I am proud to say that my husband Wayne Agnew and I have been honored to receive the State Award as well as the Dist. 8 Huffman Award

The Huffman's joined Old Time Fiddlers in 1977. Ross passed away in 1995 but devoted 18 years of his life to CSOTFA and Lady Rae devoted 43 years to Old Time Fiddlers.

The last time Lady Rae presented the Huffman Award in person was at the state contest in April 2013 when she presented the trophy to Eric Anderson.



9/11 Remembrance

Jim Friery is Vice President of District 8 & Vice Pres. of Old Time Country Bluegrass Gospel Music Assoc and is a teacher at a Middle School in No. Hollywood. I saw these posted on his Facebook page and thought it was so awesome that I wanted to share it. We need more teachers like Jimmy.

Even though I teach PE in middle school, today was one of those days where I made sure my students got a lesson in sacrifice,



service, and resilience. The lesson featured Firefighter John Morabito, who was one of the first responders to the World Trade Center attack. His story is on YouTube and can be easily found. I was pleased to see my students write essays at the end of today's lesson with thought, decency, and class. Never forget!

I'd like to give a big shout out to my New Jersey friend, Jim Nerney. Today I went to the Post Office to mail about 150 letters of gratitude. Jim worked on the construction of the new World Trade Center. Last week, my classes did lessons on the 9/11 attacks. One of their assignments was to write a thank you letter to Jim for his contributions towards rebuilding the Towers. Also, my classes heard the story of Chuck Costello, a hero on 9/11. Chuck's story can be found on any internet search. The morning of the attacks, Chuck selflessly raced over to the Towers to assist in getting trapped people out of the WTC elevators. Having expert knowledge in elevator operations, Chuck stayed to the end trying to help people. He tragically perished when the Towers collapsed. My students also wrote letters to his widow, Mary. Jim and Chuck were friends, and Jim said that he would deliver the student letters to Mary Costello. Never Forget!

Below is a sample of one student's kindness:

Dear Mr. Jim Nerney,

My PE teacher told me what you did for the new World Trade Center and I would just like to thank you for your generosity. I have never been to New York City but if I do go I will definitely look at the new World Trade Center and go on the elevators. What happened on 9/11 was terrible and I would hate for it to happen again because of all the lives that were lost that day. Thank you for what you have done for the new building, have a great day!





