



The
Weiser Signal American Presents

The Fiddler 2022

Featuring

- Fiddle Parade Grand Marshals – Shiz Nakamura and Sally Bouvia
- Kent and Victor Craig to perform during Fiddle Week
- Clark Syme recalls early Fiddle Festivals
- Banjos, Fiddles and Bluegrass to open Fiddle Week
- Catch the fun during Fiddle Week with Kids' Day
- Remembering...Fiddlers attend 1962 World's Fair
- Parade • Bikers Rodeo
- Meet the Judges



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Welcome to all our fiddle festival visitors

Welcome! It is a privilege and an honor to welcome you to Weiser and the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival. Weiser would like you to know that we are glad you are here and hope you have a great time enjoying the music, the people, Stickerville, the music, the parade, the town, the music, the food, the park entertainment, and did I mention the music?

Although my musical abilities are limited, I always enjoy going to the contest to listen to the musical talents, precision, and skill of the fiddle contestants.

I also like going through Stickerville and the campgrounds to listen to jam sessions that seem to be going on at all times of the day. It is amazing to me how people who have never met can just sit down, blend in, and sound like they have played together for years.

And don't forget about all of the talent that will be playing and performing in Memorial Park. Check out the schedule to be sure you don't miss your favorite entertainment.

In addition to the Festival activities, I hope you take the time to check out the businesses that make Weiser such a great place to live, work, and play. You might want to start your morning with coffee. Weiser has several places where you can either drive through or sit down to have your favorite cup.

For breakfast, lunch, or dinner there are multiple venues that provide anything from fast food, to ethnic dining, to tradition family meals, and of course pizza!

While you are at it check out the many wonderful niche shops downtown that provide everything from gifts, to antiques, to clothing, dog grooming, recreational art, and a rare musical instrument collection.

If you need supplies or minor repairs for your RV, there are hardware stores to meet your camping needs.

If you want to take a break from all of the Festival activities, you might enjoy going fishing at the Weiser Community Fishing Pond. If you would like to go for a nice relaxing walk, there is the Weiser River Trail or again, the fishing pond. The swimming pool next to Memorial Park will be available for your pleasure. Or if you enjoy bike riding you can head out of town in any direction and find nice country roads that offer a variety of terrain for all types of biking. There is also Mann Creek Reservoir north of town in case you would like to take advantage of water activities.

If you like history and are staying anywhere near Weiser High School, you probably already know about the museum in the Snake River Heritage Center. This wonderful museum displays Weiser's rich history based on natural resources, agriculture, and ranching. While you are at it, drive, bike, or walk around town to see the rich architectural heritage with many buildings on the National Historical Register, such as the Galloway House, Pythian Castle, and Train Depot just to name a few.

Whatever your needs or preferences this week, Weiser is here to help you and show you a good time. If you have any questions, just ask a local, they will be glad to help you out.

We hope your stay in Weiser will be as pleasant and enjoyable as it is to live here. Weiser tends to be a place promoting family values and a strong sense of community. It was even named as one of five "Safest Small Towns in America" in 2021, so we hope you feel safe and comfortable here knowing we have your back.

Again, welcome to the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival and hope you have a great time enjoying the town, the activities, and most of all, the MUSIC!



Randy Hibberd, Mayor
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Shiz Nakamura and her daughter Sally Bouvia both love a good parade. They are seen here enjoying the new tradition of the graduation parade together. They will get to enjoy their next parade on the other side waving from their seat of honor as the grand marshals of the 2022 Fiddle Parade.

Mother daughter duo honored to serve as grand marshals

by Nicole Miller

Each year the Fiddle Parade committee chooses to honor the service of an individual or group of individuals who exemplify the spirit of giving and service for the community throughout their daily lives. This year's Grand Marshals for the Fiddle Parade are Shizuko Nakamura and daughter Sally Bouvia.

Parade committee leader, Patrick Nauman shared that the committee felt that there was no better representation of a multi-generational force of volunteerism. Shiz Nakamura is a pillar of the community and the two of them exemplify what Weiser is all about.

Shiz shared that she came to Weiser in 1943. They came to Weiser to work the beet fields after they were sent to concentration camps during WWII. Shiz graduated from Weiser in 1950, and she served as the class president.

Shizuko and her late husband Sut, raised their three children, Tom, Cindy, and Sally on the Weiser Flat. They ran a family farm and taught their children the value of hard work. She also worked as the secretary at Pioneer School for 12 years.

Over the years, Shiz has been known for her indirect, quiet volunteer work. Looking back, many of her acts of service have involved cooking. She has been cooking since she was 10 and is known for her mafa chicken, famous fried rice, and rice balls. From making sure there were sandwiches for the blood drives, to feeding the soccer team, and donating to food drives, many of the small acts of service have involved making sure people were fed and happy.

She also volunteered with the friends of the hospital and is now an honorary member for all her years of service. She also worked together with several of her Japanese American friends to decorate a tree for the Festival of Trees with handmade origami ornaments for several years in a row. She remembers winning a top award for their tree.

Sally Bouvia graduated from Weiser High School in 1984, after which she attended the University of Idaho and married her husband, Kevin in 1989. While they lived in various places over the years, they were excited to return to Weiser nine years ago. They had been looking for the opportunity to not only be closer to family but also to teach their own daughters about the opportunities that come from living in a small, genuine community like Weiser. Their oldest daughter Nicole had already graduated, but Lauren and Andrea were both able to attend Weiser High School.

Sally, who is currently a volunteer with the Weiser Memorial Hospital as a board trustee, shared that she has tried to follow

her mother's example of just volunteering by just looking for an opportunity to be involved with whatever event was happening in Weiser. From clothes for the cause, attending the musicals and band dinners, to school food drives, they try to support and be a part of the community that has been so wonderful to their family.

Bouvia wanted to also mention that she is blessed to be able to work for the not for profit organization – NCCE, Northwest Council for Computer Education. Her boss, Heidi Rogers is very generous in allowing all the employees to volunteer and participate in community service. She enjoys working for an organization that promotes service and community involvement and feels lucky to have been with the organization for nearly 20 years.

Bouvia shared that she and her mother both feel that Weiser offers so many opportunities to come together as a community because there are so many examples of quiet volunteerism. She shared that she was honored to be recognized as a mother-daughter pair because she pointed out that there are a lot of amazing mother-daughter duos in Weiser who work together to give back in many ways. Mabel Dobbs and Zane Davis, the Woottons, the Lukeharts, and so many more that deserve a mention.

Being honored during the Fiddle Festival is very special because the Fiddle Festival is another example of how the community comes together with so many volunteers to have a successful event each year.

Nakamura shared that her favorite memories from the Fiddle Festival were the years that she was able to volunteer to host a contestant in her home. She lived close to the high school, so she opened her home to contestant Gayla Tonaka so that she would be able to get a good night sleep and enjoy a good home-cooked breakfast before her performances. She loved listening to her practice and getting to know her family as they visited each year. She still keeps in touch with Tonaka who now works as a pharmacist for St. Luke's.

Nakamura also shared that she always enjoys a good parade. The homecoming parade, the Christmas Parade, the Fiddle Parade, and the new and fun tradition of the graduation parade are always something to look forward to. The parades bring the community together in such a fun way. She has fond memories over the years of watching some of her friends being honored as Grand Marshals. She said she was completely surprised and honored that it was her turn to get to have that title.

Nakamura will be celebrating her 90th birthday this July so the timing is like the icing on the cake. It's almost like the whole town of Weiser will be celebrating her birthday with her this year.

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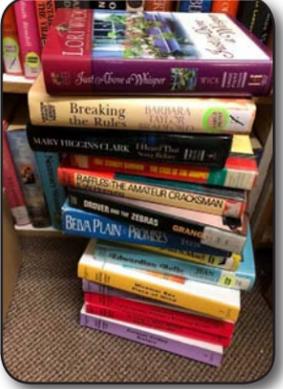
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Twin brothers, Victor and Kent Craig, are pictured performing at the Weiser Activity Center for Seniors last year at a jam session with the Gem State Fiddlers. The Weiser Activity Center for Seniors hosts a breakfast Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. The fiddlers play from 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. and invite anyone to join in the fun. Pictured below Victor and Kent perform for a 1958 Polio fundraiser. The brothers learned to play fiddle and guitar from their grandfather, Marcus Fuchs, building their skills by playing with that era of Washington County's fiddle greats, and will be performing on the Memorial Park Stage on Friday, June 24, at 3 p.m.

Getting the band back together

Craig brothers will perform together at Memorial Park

by Nancy Grindstaff

Growing up near Crane Creek Reservoir and in the Midvale area, where they learned to play fiddle and guitar in the 1950s from their maternal grandfather, Marcus Fuchs, twin brothers Kent and Victor Craig are set to perform together on the Memorial Park stage at 3 p.m., Friday, June 24.

It's not that they both haven't continued to play music through the years, playing off and on at Gem State Fiddlers jams, but it's been some decades since they planned a gig together. Joining them onstage will be John Moon on bass, and Leon Lacey on banjo.

"It will be fun," Victor said. "John and Leon are both so good. Kent has played with Leon a lot the past year."

The brothers began learning to play fiddle and guitar from their grandpa in 1954, after moving in with their grandparents to be closer to Midvale to attend high school. By 1957, Kent entered his first fiddle contest at Weiser, with Victor accompanying him, then entered again in 1958, placing seventh.

During those years, this part of Idaho boasted a number of great fiddlers, many among them becoming members of the original 1960 Idaho Oldtime Fiddlers organization. The teens honed their playing at the feet of the likes of Oren Dale, Grant Ader, Olive Fairchild, and Fay Sneed, to

name a few, and grew a lifelong love of music.

While they were in high school, the brothers formed a dance band with Milford Potter and Ed Uhrig, the Rhythm Rangers, and became well-known all over the nearby area through entertainment and show performances.

Life and time moved on, with college, a stint in the U.S. Air Force, career plans, and marriage.

They both attended Boise Junior College. Victor graduated in 1961, and went to work as a draftsman for Boeing Aircraft Corporation in Renton, Wash., for a few years, before returning to the ranch, marrying and raising a son and daughter, Forrest and Danielle.

Victor continued to operate the Crane Creek ranch, allowing their parents, LaVelle and Chloe, to live out their lives there, and up until their deaths in 2002. At the same time, his interest in and enjoyment of music didn't wane.

Kent went on to major in business, married Washington County's home economics extension agent, Carolyn Wagner, and the couple built and ran a dairy at Midvale for around 20 years. They raised their son and daughter on the dairy, Ron and Molly, then sold out in the mid-1980s dairy buyout program.

After moving to Weiser, Kent taught fiddle lessons off and on for

around 15 years, with students as young as 8 and as old as 85. Kent and Carolyn were both involved with the Idaho Oldtime Fiddlers, playing a role in the local transition to the Gem State Fiddlers, as well as Kent's playing and performing with Betty and Ozark Mountain Music. He will be performing with them at Memorial Park, as well, scheduled on Thursday's lineup.

A few years ago, Kent and Carolyn moved to The Dalles, Ore., to be near their daughter Molly and her family, and now play weekly with Blue Mountain Fiddlers. That group also plays two Sundays a month at the Cherry Grange, three times a month at the Senior Center, as well as special jam sessions held around the area.

After their parents' passing, Victor sold the old family ranch, and downsized closer to Weiser, helping to raise a couple of grandkids along the way. He started playing more often with Gem State Fiddlers, with he and Kent finding themselves playing together among the group, and also spent a period of time singing karaoke.

With a laugh, he told a funny story from his karaoke years, "One time over at the Copper Lounge, a guy sitting on a bar stool told me, 'Well, you're not the best, but you're among them,' and then he fell off the stool."





Long-time Weiser business owner Clark Syme recalls the early days of the Fiddle Festivals when Blaine Stubblefield the ‘father’ of Weiser’s National Oldtime Fiddlers’ Contest and Festival was the secretary of the Weiser Chamber of Commerce. Stubblefield was instrumental in making Weiser the Fiddle Capital of the World 69 years ago. *Photo by Nancy Grindstaff*

Getting the job done for 99 years

by Nancy Grindstaff

When Gary Eller asked me if I knew anyone who would have known Blaine Stubblefield, I thought we would be hard pressed to come up with a single one. The “father” of Weiser’s National Oldtime Fiddlers’ Contest and Festival, Stubblefield died 62 years ago, and those businesses and business owners who worked with him in bringing the 1950s Fiddle Festivals to life are all gone, too. It’s a little bit like realizing you didn’t ask your parents and grandparents enough questions while they were alive.

Then I remembered I had just recently run into Clark Syme at the *Weiser Signal American* office, where he said he would be turning 99 in May. My husband was an electrician at Syme Electric, working for Clark’s son, Greg, and now qualifying as local oldtimers ourselves, I knew the electrical contracting business dated back into the years of our own 1950s childhoods.

Clark agreed to sit down with us, although he didn’t think he would be able to shed much light on Stubblefield or those early festivals. But, there’s always something to learn from every story.

He said his earliest memories of Stubblefield had to do with his Hells Canyon whitewater boating business.

“He built his own boats, running them down the Snake River,” Syme said. “We were going to do a trip, but it somehow fell through, and we never got to go.”

Acquainted with Stubblefield as the secretary of the Weiser Chamber of Commerce, Syme said he would run into him and his wife climbing up and down the “W” hill on the north edge of town.

“He seemed to like to stay in shape,” Syme said.

Syme said he wasn’t involved with the earliest festivals, as they were happening at the same time he and his business partner, Bud McKnight, were first putting McKnight and Syme together.

“When I got back from the service, I apprenticed with Davis Heating and Electric, and worked there seven years,” he said. “We started our own business, McKnight and Syme, April 5, 1954.”

They ran the business out of his house on East Main for the first two and a-half years, then moved to where the business stood for the next 60 years on West Main St. The Syme Electric sign still hangs over the location.

“We were doing big jobs all over,” Syme said. “We had about 50 electricians working most of the time, and we were just too spread out to be able to help out

in those early years.”

In the 1970s, Syme served two terms on the Weiser City Council, then one term as mayor in the early 1980s.

Eller asked if the City Council had any particular sentiment about the Festival.

“Lots of other towns had tried for it because it was such a money maker,” Syme said. “The City gave all the help we could, and it ended up being really good for the community.”

“People come hundreds of miles, and from states all over the country,” he added.

Syme’s mayoral term coincided with a period that some look back on with great fondness, an influx of bikers and probably the tail-end of the hippie era. Nostalgia can be a funny thing, and turns out different depending on what perspective one holds at the time.

Syme said he was called out with the police to respond to complaints more than a few times in those days.

“I know Ryder Ford got to where they would move their new cars off of their lot to Ontario for the week,” he said. “But, even right now, it’s Weiser’s biggest deal.”

“I think the Washington Hotel burning in 1973 was one of the worst impacts,” he said. “The whole character changed dramatically after that, for both the festival and the town, because it was such a magnet for both.”

The success of McKnight and Syme speaks to their being part of the “greatest generation.” Family circumstances during the Great Depression put Clark into the position of needing to go to work after the eighth grade. His wife, Elaine’s situation was similar, as could be said of many who grew up during that time. A story covering his remarkable service in the U.S. Navy during WWII appeared in the June 1 edition of the *Weiser Signal American*.

“I don’t really know how we did it,” he said, referring to the business success, “but we did alright for a couple of eighth grade educations.”

It might have something to do with forward thinking and a lack of self-doubt, both worthy qualities of which we could all use more.

After 74 years of marriage, Elaine passed away in 2019.

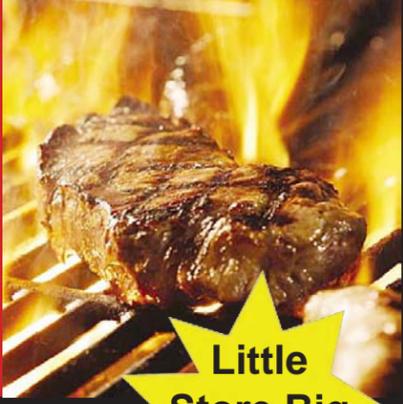
Their son, Greg, bought out McKnight’s half of the partnership in 1985, then bought out Clark about five years later. Not ready to completely hang up his electrician’s belt, Clark continued to work for a few years longer. Greg operated the business until 2017.

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The weekend prior to the start of the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival the Idaho Bluegrass Association holds a banjo contest, banjo and fiddle combo contest, a handmade pie auction with jamming and open-mic events from June 17-19. Pictured above is 'Ol Slim' Gary Eller competing in the banjo contest. Pictured below is the second place winner of last year's banjo/fiddle contest, Vi Wickham from Loveland, Colo., and Henry Strid from Eugene, Ore.

Banjos, fiddles and bluegrass will open Weiser's annual festivities

Weiser's newcomers can get their fiddle contest feet wet
by Nancy Grindstaff

Weiser will start to see a population boom in the next few days, as the 69th annual migration of musicians and music lovers descend into the area around the historic Intermountain Industrial Institute for the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival.

As the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival has continued to evolve from its 1953 beginnings, the addition of opening the festivities with a weekend of banjo contesting was introduced about a decade ago.

With a membership of 500, the Idaho Bluegrass Association has picked up the banjo weekend's sponsorship this year and has laid plans for June 17-19 for jamming and open-mic events, banjo contests, a banjo and fiddle combo contest, and a handmade pie auction. The contests will be held on the auditorium stage inside Hooker Hall, which also goes by the moniker of the Snake River Heritage Center.

Along with all of that, an evening of Bluegrass in the Park is promised on Tuesday, June 21, on the stage at Memorial Park, featuring well-known Idaho bluegrass bands, Dry Buck, The Woolly Buggers, and Chicken Dinner Road.

Idaho Bluegrass Association President Mike Murray said there is a lot of excitement around the event's organization.

"This year should be exciting with the intermediate and advanced competitions, and then the crowd favorite banjo-fiddle

contest," Murray said. "We will also have a booth set up by Slocum Hall and look forward to seeing everyone and jamming at night.

"IBA's goal is to preserve, present, and promote bluegrass music throughout Idaho," Murray added. "Weiser is a big part of our efforts with the banjo contest, Bluegrass in the Park, and just sitting around the camp sites and playing bluegrass music."

The Intermediate Banjo contest is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. on Saturday, June 18. The advanced contest will start at 1 p.m. on Sunday, and the Banjo-Fiddle contest, plus the Famous Pie Auction, will begin at 6 p.m. Sunday evening.

Murray said capacity crowds are expected and a whole lot of fun. All participants and winners will receive prizes.

On site registration for all three contests will be at the Idaho Bluegrass Association booth, in front of Slocum Hall at 10 a.m. on Friday, June 17 and up to 2 hours before each contest. There is no entry fee. Pre-registration is also available under the Banjo Contest drop down at the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival webpage www.fiddlecontest.org.

After Sunday evening's contests, the week's kickoff fun will continue in the Heritage Center's third floor ballroom with the annual Nancy Thorwardson Western Swing Dance from 9 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., featuring music from Stickerville Swing and The Goathead Ticklers. Admission is by donation.





There is a full line-up of performers scheduled at the Memorial Park Stage from Tuesday through Saturday. Pictured above is Weiser's local high school band the Wrench Monkeys, consisting of members, from left, Rickie Haynes, Kade Hill, Jestyn Hamilton, Peter McKenna and Cameron Funke. They will be performing Wednesday at 8 p.m. and Friday at 8:30 p.m. Pictured below is Emma Tolman who will perform on Wednesday at 3:30 and on Friday at 5 p.m. Dennis Cooper, bottom right, handles the sound system at the stage and also takes time to perform on his harmonica. Cooper will be on stage Wednesday at 4 p.m., Friday at 2 p.m. and Saturday at 6 p.m. Photos by Sarah Imada

Memorial Park Stage Entertainment

There will be more live entertainment at Memorial Park during Fiddle Week than you can shake a stick at ... or maybe a fiddle bow.

Nearly 40 different acts are scheduled to perform at the venue, including rock bands, instrumental solos, vocal solos, and more.

Several local artists will be participating, so be sure to catch performances by Emma Tolman, a recent Weiser High School graduate, and the Wrench Monkeys, a band that also features WHS graduates, as well as Dennis Cooper who has been entertaining, and impressing, crowds with his harmonica skills for decades.

There will also be food vendors, so come by Memorial Park to enjoy the festivities.

Memorial Park stage schedule

Tuesday, June 21

- 1 p.m.-2 p.m. – Skookumchuck Bearclaws
- 2 p.m.-3 p.m. – Stu Carlson
- 4 p.m.-5 p.m. – Twin Falls Bluegrass
- 5 p.m.-6 p.m. – Red Boots and Basil
- 6 p.m.-7 p.m. – Wooly Buggers
- 7 p.m.-8 p.m. – Dry Buck
- 8 p.m.-9 p.m. – Chicken Dinner Road

Wednesday, June 22

- 1 p.m.-2 p.m. – TBA
- 2 p.m.-3 p.m. – Bruce “Looselip”
- 3 p.m.-3:30 p.m. – Ken Worthington
- 3:30 p.m.-4 p.m. – Emma Tolman
- 4 p.m.-5 p.m. – Dennis Cooper
- 5 p.m.-6 p.m. – Twin Falls Bluegrass

- 6 p.m.-7 p.m. – Dan Doshier
- 7 p.m.-8 p.m. – TBA
- 8 p.m.-9 p.m. – Wrench Monkeys

Thursday, June 23

- 1 p.m.-2 p.m. – TBA
- 2 p.m.-3 p.m. – TBA
- 3 p.m.-4 p.m. – Lisa Johnson
- 4 p.m.-5 p.m. – Gem State Fiddlers
- 5 p.m.-6 p.m. – Ozark Mountain Music
- 6 p.m.-7 p.m. – Half-Fast Hillbillies
- 7 p.m.-8 p.m. – Just For Kicks
- 8 p.m.-9 p.m. – TBA

Friday, June 24

- 1 p.m.-2 p.m. – Dan Doshier
- 2 p.m.-3 p.m. – Dennis Cooper
- 3 p.m.-4 p.m. – Kent and Victor Craig
- 4 p.m.-5 p.m. – And Friends
- 5 p.m.-5:30 p.m. – Emma Tolman
- 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. – Weiser Cheerleader Campers
- 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. – McAnallys
- 7:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. – Nocturnals
- 8:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. – Wrench Monkeys

Saturday, June 25

- 1 p.m.-2:30 p.m. – TBA
- 2:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m. – Dance Extreme
- 3 p.m.-4 p.m. – Skookumchuck Bearclaws
- 4 p.m.-5 p.m. – Sharon Rekward
- 5 p.m.-6 p.m. – And Friends
- 6 p.m.-7 p.m. – Dennis Cooper
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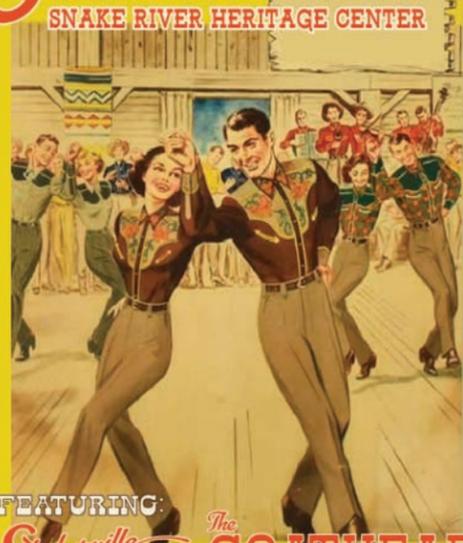
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Lutherie to offer repairs, tuning at Fiddle Contest

Gary Santa is arguably ‘the best there is’ when it comes to the ancient craft

by Philip A. Janquart

In a small apartment in Boise, Idaho a man, small in stature and big on intellect, quietly plies his trade.

His hands are rough, and his soft blue eyes, which match his personality, don’t work like they used to.

His fingers, however, are nimble and dexterous, his 27 years of knowledge and experience guiding a process designed to let musicians do what they do best.

By the looks of it, the Stelling banjo he is leaning over has no doubt seen some miles. He handles it like a kid who fell out of a treehouse and broke his arm.

And Gary Santa, arguably the best luthier in the country, is a doctor of sorts. But instead of a white lab coat and stethoscope, he is dressed on this day in “classy-casual,” an ensemble you might wear to an Alive After Five concert, which reflects his do-it-my-way life philosophy and easy-going demeanor.

Save for a small belly befitting a man in his 60s, Santa appears to be in good shape. He is short, with white receding hair and well-groomed mustache and sports a blue and white checkered button-up shirt, khaki shorts and sandals.

Tools of his trade are scattered across a workbench set up in the living room of his small north-end apartment, instruments carefully leaned up against a wall on the other side, in a kind of waiting room, as he attends to his current patient.

“It was sitting in a guitar stand and fell somehow, and it broke here at the peg head,” he explained, inspecting the progress of his repair work through a visor equipped with magnifying lenses that overlay a pair of readers.

When he is finished, the Stelling, which came to Santa shattered, will look and play as though nothing ever happened. Like a broken bone that has fused and healed, it will be harder than it was before.

“If at all possible, you want to make them better than they were originally,” Gary said of the instruments he repairs. “Because of the methodology I used to put this banjo back together, it will actually be stiffer and stronger than the day Jeff Stelling made it. Of course, it also has to be perfectly playable as a musical instrument.”

Gary said his goal is to give his clients the opportunity to make music instead of focusing on the material details.

“If you are a professional player, the instrument has to be set up in such a way that you don’t worry about playing it; it does what you want it to do, the way you want it done,” Gary explained in a subtle dialect that reveals his Midwest upbringing. “So, now you can just concentrate on what you are there for in the first place and that is to play music. I’m here to make sure your instrument

isn’t fighting against you.”

The Backstory

Gary was born into a musical family but, ironically, was never interested in music until later on when, at 35, he began taking guitar lessons for the first time.

He eventually got good at it and even performed at various venues across the country.

“My grandfather played with Lawrence Welk,” he stated matter-of-factly. “My mother was a professional country/western singer and my two cousins attended Julliard (the prestigious arts conservatory in New York City). They always joked that I must be adopted because there was a stage at our family reunions where everyone could perform and when it was my turn, I told them, ‘I got nothin.’”

Gary grew up in the Black Hills of South Dakota and, during his first career calling, made a living on the lecture circuit, giving talks about bicycle mechanics and construction. He once mesmerized a crowded hall of students and professors at MIT in Cambridge, Mass., who reasoned he must either be an alum or had graduated from Stanford, the school’s brainy west coast counterpart.

His First Career

He first discovered his passion for bicycles while working at a local bike shop.

“When I was about 26, I asked my father what was the best job he ever had and why,” Gary said. “His answer was this: ‘I don’t know, Gary, but the best job for you is to get paid for what you are going to do anyway.’”

Though he does not have a college degree, he would go on to educate some of the brightest minds in the country, including at MIT where he once gave a lecture on the nuts and bolts of mechanical engineering and structural analysis as it applies to bicycle construction.

He schooled them on why bike frames are built the way they are, what happens to tubes during polar moments of inertia, torsional rigidity, ductility, and how that applies to heat-affected zones within the frame.

Gary had a simple answer when professors asked how it was that a guy, who holds no degrees, knew so much about something that they were handsomely paid to teach.

“I told them that the reason I could do that is because I’ve taken everything they know, the theoretical knowledge they have, and applied it in this little window, this world of bicycles, in the real world,” he said, grinning from ear to ear. “I learned the value of learning from the best people and that’s the difference.”

Gary spent 20 years in the cycle sport industry and served a stint as an educator for the Olympic Training Center. He was the mechanic for legendary road



Gary Santa, arguably the best luthier in the country, works on a damaged Stelling banjo that, when he is finished with it, will be stronger than it was when it was made. Santa will be on hand during the Weiser Fiddle Contest to provide repairs and tuning. Photo by Philip A. Janquart

racing cyclist Greg LaMond, worked with U.S. Olympic gold medalist Alexi Grewal, and managed the sixth-largest bike shop in the U.S. He also worked for a handful of prestigious builders, helping to construct bike factories in the U.S. and Canada.

“He was fun to work with and he challenged me,” Gary said of LaMond.

He also supported the now defunct Ore-Ida Women’s Challenge, which brought the best cyclists from all over the globe to race in Idaho and was the mechanic for his then girlfriend’s national cycling team.

That’s when he first arrived in the “Gem State.” Years later, he decided to make Boise his permanent home and has lived there for the past 14 years.

His Second Calling

It was while helping to construct a bike factory in Canada that Gary received his second calling – literally.

He heard an audible voice while welding and was curious why anyone would distract him

in the middle of such a delicate procedure.

“Arc tig welding is very loud and very bright,” he explained. “It takes all your hand/eye coordination and concentration.” So, it was surprising when he heard someone behind him speak.

“Many people say they have not heard the voice of the Lord; I have,” Gary calmly stated, his expression peaceful, his posture relaxed.

He continued: “I heard a voice say, ‘Guitar repair is your next career.’ The voice was as clear and as soft as I am speaking to you now. I turned around and nobody was there.”

It would be another two years before his commitment in Canada was complete, Gary returning to his home in Durango, Colo. He had taken his bike out and was riding along a road he had previously traveled when he noticed something he had not seen before.

“I went for a bike ride in the San Juan Mountains, and I rode by a house that had a sign, ‘Canyon Music Woodworks, Stringed

Instrument Repair,” he recalled. “Suddenly, I found myself riding straight up the driveway.”

Shop owner, Bruce Allsop, was caught off guard and not particularly interested in Gary’s proposal to become his apprentice.

Two weeks later, Gary got the call that ultimately altered the course of his life. Allsop had a change of heart, inviting him to his shop for one day only.

“At the end of the day, he asked me to come up to his house to have dinner with him and his wife,” he chuckled. “Before I left that evening, he said, ‘Well, see you next week.’”

That was the beginning of what has turned out to be a 27-year career thus far, Gary applying his philosophy from his 20 years in the cycling industry to his new career, seeking out apprenticeship opportunities with the best in the business.

He has apprenticed with several leading guitar builders such as Taylor Guitars, Scott Baxendale (former founder and owner



Idaho's Oldtime Fiddlers were invited to perform at the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. Thirty-nine fiddlers and accompanists took the trip, starting from Boise and picking up musicians as they traveled across the Treasure Valley. Playing fiddle tunes on the 17-hour bus ride, they were also met at the communities of Weiser, LaGrande, and Pendleton by well-wishers. The performance lasted two and a-half hours and was a rousing success. *Fiddlers Hall of Fame photo.*

Remember that one time: Fiddling at the World's Fair

by Nancy Grindstaff

Set in motion in 1953 as intermission entertainment at an annual square dance festival, by 1960 Weiser's spring two-day fiddle contest had gained in popularity, drawing more and more contestants each year from across the state and the northwest.

Looking ahead to Idaho's 1963 territorial centennial that year, Governor Robert Smylie and the state Centennial Commission tabbed Corral, Idaho's Mannie Shaw to organize the Old Time Fiddlers of Idaho. The organization effort was a huge success, and the Idaho fiddlers were so impactful the Centennial Commission disbanded later that year, while the fiddlers carried on the centennial promotional effort.

Over the next couple of years the Fiddlers traveled the full breadth and width of the state, playing anytime, anywhere. They also received special invitations to play at a variety of community festivals and civic organizations, including the

national convention of the Western Writers of America in Boise in 1962, and for both of Idaho's legislative bodies during the 1963 session.

But, the most memorable and special invitation came for the Idaho Fiddlers to play at the Opera House of the Century 21, Seattle World's Fair on May 21, 1962.

Thirty-nine members signed on to make the trip, agreeing to fund their personal expenses, while performing in jam sessions to raise the cooperative costs of the trip. They ordered specially made matching western shirts for the performance, which were decorated with fiddles and, on the back, the words Idaho Fiddlers. One troupe member's shirt, Collie Blevins, is on display at Slocum Hall's NOTFC Fiddlers Hall of Fame museum room.

With a majority of the fiddlers riding together, a bus was chartered and the first passengers boarded at Boise. More fiddlers were taken aboard at prearranged

whistlestops along the route until well after noon.

At Weiser, the fiddlers stopped in at radio station KWEI, just south of town on Highway 95. Some additional fiddlers from the upper country joined them there, cutting a tape at the station's studio for a later broadcast. Coming into Weiser's city limits, the entourage was met by Weiser High School's marching band and a police escort to the Washington Hotel, where they put on a street corner jam session. The busload of Idaho celebrities was greeted similarly at LaGrande and Pendleton.

The bus driver is said to have nicknamed the bus "Nightmare," as the fiddlers jammed for 17 hours straight. But, they had grouped up in three different sections of the bus, with each group playing different tunes, so it's not hard to imagine where the driver was coming from with the label.

Arriving in Seattle, the travelers had a couple of days to go their own ways,

exploring the Fair, riding the Monorail, and going to the top of the Space Needle.

They all, of course, knew well the songs planned for the performance, but several circumstances left them without a pre-performance full rehearsal.

"We had NEVER all played together at the same time," a reporter from the trip wrote in the 1963 Idaho Oldtime Fiddlers publication printed for the Idaho Centennial celebration.

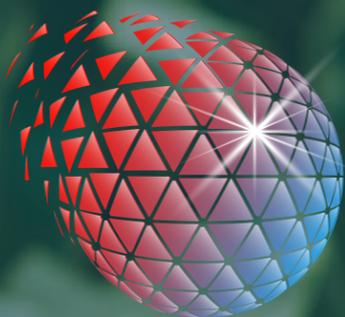
The curtains parted, and Idaho's Oldtime Fiddlers opened with Ragtime Annie.

"A deafening roar of applause died away, and as we stood there – 39 of us – on the stage of the World's Fair Opera House – our 'Mr. Personality Man' emcee, Bill Brummett, said, 'Good evenin, folks!'"

Those of us who grew up in Weiser, likely have memories of Brummett as

see *WORLD'S FAIR, Page 15*

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Katrina Nicolayeff, center, won the 2021 Grand National Champion title at the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest. She is the first fiddler to earn six titles. Her other titles came in 2011, 2013, 2016, 2018, and 2019. Nicolayeff is one of this year's fiddle judges. Pictured below, Small Fry division competitor, Sawyer Dietrich, shows off his skills. Dietrich, the youngest competitor of last year's competition, finished fourth in his division. *Photos by Nancy Grindstaff*

Contest Stage Schedule

The 2022 National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest will begin on Tuesday, June 21, and conclude with the Grand National Finals on Saturday, June 25. The contest will be held at Weiser High School in the auditorium.

Daily information:

7:30 a.m. – Doors open daily Tuesday through Friday.

Ticket prices: Daytime tickets are \$3. Tuesday through Thursday night tickets are \$8 for children, \$10 adults; Friday night \$12 children, \$18 adults and Saturday \$20 children and \$25 adults.

6:30 p.m. – Seating opens for Tuesday-Friday for night rounds.

Seniors will be admitted free of charge on Thursday, June 23 from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tuesday, June 21

8 a.m.-9:15 a.m. – On-Line Youth, round 1 (remote).

9:30 a.m.-noon – Small Fry round 1 (in person).

1 p.m.-2 p.m. – Small Fry round 2 (in person).

2:15 p.m.-4:30 p.m. – Swing Fiddling (17 and under) round 1 (in person) and Swing (18 and Over) round 1 (in person).

7 p.m.-9:30 p.m. – Judges Show, Youngest Fiddler from Small Fry, Small Fry round 3, Certified Showcase - Junior, Senior and Senior Senior, Swing Fiddling 17 and under finals, Swing Fiddling 18 and over finals, and awards (Showcase awards Junior, Senior, and Senior Senior, Small Fry awards and Swing 17 and under and 18 and over.)

Wednesday, June 22

8 a.m.-11:45 p.m. – Junior Junior round 1 (in person).

1 p.m.-2:30 p.m. – Twin Fiddling round 1 (in person).

2:45 p.m.-3:45 p.m. – Junior Junior round 2 (in person).

4 p.m.-5 p.m. – On-Line Youth round 2 (remote).

7 p.m.-9:30 p.m. – Judges Show, Certified Showcase - grand national, adult, young adult, Junior-Junior round 3, On-Line Youth round 3, Twin Fiddling round 2, Special, Showcase Awards - Grand National, Adult, Young Adult, On-Line Youth awards, Junior Junior awards, Twin Fiddling awards.

Thursday, June 23

8 a.m.-9:30 a.m. – Adult round 1 (in person).

9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m. – Senior round 1 (in person).

11 a.m.-noon – Senior Senior round 1 (in person).

1 p.m.-2 p.m. – Adult round 2 (in person).

2:15 p.m.-3 p.m. – Senior round 2 (in person).

3:15 p.m.-4 p.m. – Senior Senior round 2 (in person).

7 p.m.-10:15 p.m. – Judges Show, Oldest Fiddler from Senior Senior, Certified Showcase - Junior Junior and Small Fry awards, Senior, Senior Senior, and Adult awards.

Friday, June 24

8 a.m.-11:15 a.m. – Junior round 1 (in person).

11:30 a.m.-1:45 p.m. – On-Line General round 1 (remote).

2 p.m.-3:50 p.m. – Young Adult round 1 (in person).

4:05 p.m.-5 p.m. – Junior round 2 (in person).

7 p.m.-10:30 p.m. – Judges Show, Amy Stukenholtz Award for a female from the Young Adult division, Young Adult round 2, Junior round 3, Young Adult round 3, On Line General round 2, Special, Awards for Juniors and awards for Young Adult.

Saturday, June 25

11 a.m. – Parade begins at Weiser High School, proceeds through downtown area to Weiser Middle School (see map on Page 13.)

2:30 p.m. - Weiser High School opens ticket sales at contest site. Will call tickets may be picked up.

3 p.m. – National Grand Champion round 1 (in person), followed by a dinner break.

6:30 p.m. – Judges, Special, Grand Champion round 2, On Line General round 3, Grand Champion round 3, Special, Grand Champion round 4, Special, Awards Accompanist, On Line General awards, Grand Champion awards.

Tickets for the evening show may be purchased at the ticket office or on-line at www.fiddlecontest.org.

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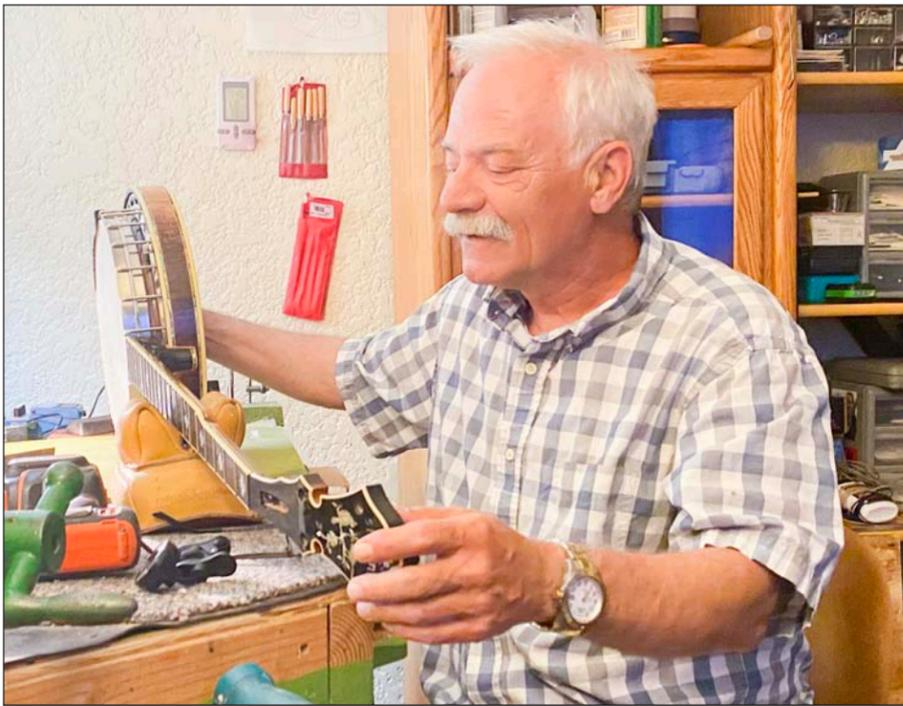
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Gary Santa's first career was in the cycling industry and once gave a lecture at MIT on mechanical engineering as it applies to bike construction. He eventually became a luthier, a trade he has done now for 27 years. Photo Philip A. Janquart

from page 8

Helping to make music sound good

of Baxendale Guitar), Mossman Guitar, and Mike Lull Custom Guitars.

Today, some of his clients include Mike Altekruze, a highly studied and regarded jazz player who attended the Jazz Institute, Northwest Finger-Style Champion Wayne White, singer/songwriter and producer Michael J. Brown, and Nampa musician Gary Eller.

He was the last person to work on Pinto Bennett's guitars, an influential Idaho singer-songwriter who shared stages with country stars and wrote songs for the band Reckless Kelly.

"I'm adjusting his instrument to one, one-thousandth of an inch," Gary said of the work he is doing for Brown. "To a professional player, they can feel it, can hear it. It's a tactile thing, a feel and sound thing. Those people who demand, and can hear, that kind of stuff can feel these incremental changes and it's the sum of them all that makes a difference. It's no-

ticeable."

Weiser Fiddle Festival

Gary will be attending next week's National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival in support of the event. He will have a workspace set up at the Weiser High School wood shop, adjacent to the auditorium where the Fiddle Contest will be held and will be available to all musicians for repairs or fine-tuning of their instruments, which includes everything from guitars and fiddles to cellos and mandolins.

"I've always wanted to attend the Weiser Fiddle Fest and always came up with reasons why I couldn't go," he said. "This year, I'm making it a priority. "I'm really enjoying the association with the Weiser Fiddle Fest. To be a part of that and to help people make music feels good."

Dennis Cooper, co-owner of the Bee Tree Folk School in Weiser, summed up his thoughts about Gary very simply.

"He is the best in the country," he said.

Bikers Rodeo to feature live music for 2022

by Philip A. Janquart

There's a rodeo coming to town, but it doesn't have anything to do with cowboys or bulls, rather bikers and their hogs – that is, their motorcycles.

The annual Weiser Bikers' Rodeo, hosted by Ole's Tavern and The Copper Lounge, is scheduled for June 25 at Ole's, located at 617 US-95 in Weiser. The action begins at 3 p.m. with a projected end time of 7 p.m.

Sign-up for the rodeo starts at 1:30 p.m.

The rodeo pits riders against each other in events that test their motorcycle handling skills. Some of the more popular events include the Beer Keg Race, where riders, using the front wheel of their hog, race to see who can roll an empty beer keg across the finish line first. Contestants whose kegs roll outside their lanes are disqualified.

Another favorite is a challenging contest to see who can ride their motorcycle the slowest. The aim is to cross the finish line last, not first. Contestants who lose control and are forced to use their feet to steady their hog are disqualified. The event is a true test of stability skills, riders sweating it out as they attempt to avoid tipping their motorcycle over. Depending on the make and model, road bikes can weigh anywhere from 300 to 600 pounds.

Cost at the gate for the public is \$5 per person, with kids 10 and under free. Proceeds this year will benefit the Weiser High School volleyball program.

There will also be food and arts and crafts vendors that will be open to the public at approximately 1 p.m. before the rodeo starts.

Pat Ryan, of Ryan's Ranch, was chosen

as this year's rodeo Grand Marshal.

"He owns a ranch here in Weiser; I'm not sure what he grows, I've never gotten into that with him, but he has always supported us," said event organizer and the Copper Lounge owner Deb Aburto. "He's supported this thing since it began, back in the '60s. He's always been in town, always supported everybody and has never wanted his name announced, but this year, we are announcing it."

Live Band

New this year is a live band called "Lucky Tongue" that will start rocking at Ole's sometime between 7 and 8 p.m.

The band will perform atop a flatbed trailer, which will be pulled onto the rodeo ground following the rodeo.

Lucky Tongue was formed by three individuals who have been performing together since 2009, according to the band's website www.luckytongue.com. Not a lot of history about the band can be found on the Internet, but a YouTube video notes that the song "She Doesn't Love Me," from their 2017 debut album, was produced in McCall, Idaho, and was filmed at Ponderosa State Park in McCall.

You can find the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BkrB26UqCMY>.

The band, originally from Borrego Springs, Calif. near San Diego, has apparently toured all over the U.S. and the globe.

"They started out small, but they are pretty huge now," Aburto said. "They used to be a little local band but now they are all over, in Hawaii, Alaska, Australia, and Europe."

For more information, contact Deb Aburto at (208) 405-5139.

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A Fiddle Week favorite is Kids' Day

by Nicole Miller

A favorite day of Fiddle Week for many of the families is Kids' Day. The block of State Street between Main and Idaho is turned into a street side carnival of games, activities and treats. The Kids' Day tradition will continue. Families of all ages are invited to come out and have some good old-fashioned fun on Thursday, June 23 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The activities will include carnival games, a carnival swing ride, a dunk tank, football toss, sno cones, obstacle course, cotton candy, crafts, bean bag toss, and more.

One of the big activities will be the ball drop at 11 a.m. Done with larger balls this year that will be easier for the businesses to write on, there will be a \$25 grand prize ball in each age group along with discounts and prizes from local businesses.

The entrance to the event and many of the activities are free, but most of the activities require tickets to participate. At just 25 cents per ticket, the activities are a great way for families to have affordable fun. Organizer, Patrick Nauman shared that the whole initiative behind kids' day is that kids of any economic means can come out and have a good time, and now without the carnival, the family fun activities are more important than ever.

Kids' day offers not only fun and games downtown, but also a great way for local nonprofits to raise money for their organizations. ROSE Advocates, Arrow Heart Adventure Camp, the fireworks fund, scholarship organizations and more will be able to raise money through the ticket sales. Nauman shared that in recent years, the event has raised around \$1500. Considering the cost of just 25 cents a ticket, it



Kids' Day will be held on Thursday, June 24 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The street between Idaho and Main will be blocked off to set up fun activities for the children to enjoy. Last year Weiser Memorial Hospital brought a big version of the game 'Operation' for kids to test their operating skills. Pictured from left, Kasey Davis, marketing and community relations manager helped Grace Thompson remove a wrench from the ankle while her mom Lisa and brother Wyatt look on.

adds up quickly with estimates of 1100 to 1300 kids participating in the event.

"It's what Fiddle Festival is all about," Nauman said. "Bringing families together for some good old-fashioned fun."

Nauman shared that with kids' day being such an important event to the Fiddle

Festival, he actually begins planning the next year's kids' day as soon as the current year's event is over. Then, the detailed and focused planning begins in February. It takes a lot of coordination, planning and volunteers to make the day a success.

One of the great things about kids' day

is that it brings families downtown. While spending time downtown together, families can also check out the local businesses and all that they have to offer. Many of them will be having specials to help celebrate the day, so it's a great time to offer those businesses much deserved support.



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Fiddle judges are deeply grounded in contesting

by Nancy Grindstaff

Weiser's 69th National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival is welcoming back the whole experience for 2022's "third full week of June," with the central feature contest open to the public and an expectation of audiences returning to Weiser High School's auditorium to take it all in.

The contest's judges are lined up, each one with decades of fiddling under their belt, a passion for music, and, particularly, the continuation of fiddle festivals and competitions.

Four for NOTFC divisions

Four fiddlers with long NOTFC histories will cover the sequestered judges room during the week, with three actively scoring through each contest segment, and the fourth rotating in to allow breaks.



Dan Emert

Dan Emert has played the fiddle for over 40 years, placing highly in many contests around the West. He has won the Oregon State, Washington State 2017 Adult Champion, Colorado State Adult Champion, the Northwest Regionals, Western Open Junior and Adult Champion, and two National Championships at the NOTFC in Weiser, Junior in 1986 and Adult in 2006.

Emert has been a clinical microbiologist for 25 years, and currently resides in Walla Walla, Wash.

His philosophy on fiddling is straightforward. Technical proficiency, including intonation and accuracy, is extremely important, but even more is essential rhythm. As dance music, traditional fiddling must make your toes tap. That groove must be found to make it all work.

He prefers a variety of different tunes in different styles, like Texas-style, Scottish, Irish, and Swing. If it sounds good, it is good.

He wants fiddlers to play to their strengths, and, most importantly, have fun.

"If you're not having fun, you're doing it wrong!"



Celeste Johnson

Celeste Johnson grew up in Arvada, Colo., where she discovered her passion for fiddling at the young age of five. She began studying classical violin, but within a year she discovered Texas-style fiddle music and devoted all her time and practice to it.

Throughout her musical career, Celeste has studied with multiple renowned national champion fiddlers and master musicians who continue to shape and inspire her, including Katie Glassman.

Johnson now teaches with Glassman at Fiddle School, a virtual fiddle academy dedicated to perpetuating quality old-time fiddling.

Johnson has won her division at the NOTFC five times, earning the first of these titles when she was 11 years-old in the Junior-Junior division. She is also a two-time Rocky Mountain Regional Fiddle Champion, a multiple-time Colorado State division fiddle champion, and the 2019 Walnut Valley Fiddle Champion. Her students have also gone on to win state and national titles.

Johnson plays with a variety of bands whose repertoires include western swing, traditional swing, jazz manouche, country, and more.

She takes great pleasure in sharing her enthusiasm for fiddle through teaching. She teaches by ear, the way fiddle tunes have been passed down for hundred of years, although teaching virtually adds a modern twist. She has many years of experience teaching students young and old, beginner to advanced. When not playing music, she loves to read, travel, and pet cats.

When judging, Johnson listens for musicality, groove, cleanness, and a strong connection to the roots of the music.

"I like to hear contestants play tunes that highlight their strengths," she said. "I'd much rather hear someone play a simple tune well than hear a difficult tune played poorly. I love to hear a fiddler in a solid groove with their guitar players. Those are times when I can't resist tapping my toes."

"Above all, I love it when people sound like they're having fun as they play," she said.

Understanding the subjectiveness of fiddle contests, Johnson thinks it's important to remember that results are not everything, and they are not personal.

"Fiddle contests are an essential part of this musical tradition because they bring us together to connect over our shared love of this music," she added. "That connection is what brings me back to this contest year after year, and I hope it's what brings everyone here, too."

to play what they are good at and not above their own ability.

"I will also listen for originality, feel, dynamics, and the emotion the contestant puts into their music," she said.



Dan Stewart

Dan Stewart has played fiddle for nearly 40 years. Over the years he has won a few local and regional contests, but more recently he has grown to enjoy judging. He has judged the NOTFC four times, as well as many other Weiser-certified contests in the Pacific Northwest. He believes we can all contribute to the preservation of fiddling in our own unique ways.

In addition to playing and judging, Stewart has digitized many old jam cassettes in order to preserve and share Texas-style fiddle music. These can be downloaded at <https://texasfiddle.blogspot.com>.

By day, Stewart is a mild-mannered professor of entrepreneurship at Gonzaga University, and a business partner in Dardan Enterprises.

Partnered with another longtime NOTFC supporter and fiddle contest accompanist, Darin Meeks, Dardan Enterprises is a commercial construction firm based out of Post Falls, Idaho, specializing in building and remodeling professional office space. Dardan serves government and private clients in North Idaho and Eastern Washington.

When judging fiddle contests, beyond basic intonation and rhythm, Stewart enjoys a fiddler who listens carefully to the accompanists and tries to make the group sound like an ensemble.

"I'm also a bit old-school in my appreciation for danceability, which improves if the fiddler plays at a speed that sounds comfortable and is within the fiddler's ability," Stewart said. "In the end, if you played your round better than you did the last time, or better than you thought you could, you are doing very well!"



Katrina Nicolayeff

Katrina Nicolayeff is a six-time National Champion, winning the NOTFC Grand National Title in 2011, 2013, 2016, 2018, and 2019. Nicolayeff became the first NOTFC competitor to claim the Grand National title for a sixth time in 2021.

In September, 2021, she broke another record, winning her fourth Grand Master Fiddler Champion title in Nashville, Tenn.

Nicolayeff started playing rhythms on her fiddle when she was 16-months old. At 18 months, her mother, Bobbie Pearce, started teaching her oldtime fiddle tunes. She entered her first fiddle contest at the age of 2.

Born in Nampa, Idaho, Nicolayeff now lives in Meridian, Idaho, with her husband, Alex, 13-year-old son, A.J., and 9-year-old daughter, Chloe. She enjoys spending time with her family and loves being a mom.

When judging contests, she listens for intonation, correct timing and groove, appropriate dance tempo, and good tone. She encourages fiddlers

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These are the Rus Davis Memorial Workshops in honor of Rus, my late friend and fellow fiddler. We plan to assemble all the students and break them up into bands. Other fiddlers and I will be coaching the fiddlers, guitarists will coach guitar players, bassists will be working with bass players and singers will coach vocalists. We will be giving out CDs with great western swing tunes as well as sheet music and lyric sheets. At the culmination of the five days, we will be presenting a concert featuring all the student bands. This is a great opportunity to learn that wild and wonderful music we call western swing, so please join us. - Paul Anastasio

2022 brings Western Swing Camp back to Stickerville

by Nancy Grindstaff

Leading into Fiddle Week, and regardless of expertise, fiddlers, guitarists, bassists, and vocalists are invited to join in a five-day Fiddle and Band Camp in Stickerville, Wednesday through Sunday, June 15-19, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. each day.

Led once again by Paul Anastasio, he will be assisted by some of the west's top western swing players and singers, coaching the camp participants in their specific instruments and singing.

Students will receive CDs of great western swing tunes, along with sheet music and lyric sheets. After the five workshops, student bands will be featured in a concert.

Anastasio is a perennial in Weiser during the annual National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest, winning the 18 and over Swing Division in 2018, and placing second in 2019. He has orchestrated the annual workshop in memory of his friend and fellow Washington fiddler, Rus Davis, for



Leading Stickerville's annual Western Swing Camp, Paul Anastasio, right, and Albanie Faletta on guitar, are pictured during a previous year's workshop. The classes will run from 1-3 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday, June 15-19, ahead of the opening day of the National Oldtime Fiddlers' Contest and Festival. Workshop students will perform in concert on Sunday. Photo by Nancy Grindstaff.

several years.

His professional swing and western fiddle roots run deep. Between the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, Anastasio played professionally with Merle Haggard, Asleep at the Wheel, Larry Gatlin, and Loretta

Lynn.

In recent years, Anastasio relocated to Lafayette, Louisiana, where he has played professionally with some locally-based bands including Stop the Clock Western Swing and Runaway Fiddle.

Swing and Twin Fiddling judges

by Nancy Grindstaff

Three Portland-area fiddling aficionados and long-time fiddle contest competitors will return to Weiser's NOTFC to serve as judges for the 2022 Twin Fiddling and Swing contest divisions. It will be surprising if they aren't each found entered in a contest division, as well.



Aaron Carter

Aaron Carter has been playing fiddle since she was 2 years old, and has competed in hundreds of contests, along with teaching many people to play the violin.

Carter is the current National Young Adult Champion, won here in 2021, the Oregon State Champion, a seven-time Colorado State Champion, and she just recently placed second in the Gone to Texas Division in Hallettsville, Texas.

Steeped in Texas-style fiddling her entire life, the groove is the most important part of fiddling for her.

When judging Twin Fiddling, Carter looks for groove, synchrony, and content, as well as technical ability and originality. In the Swing competition, she will be looking for original content that doesn't stray too far from the original melody, along with technical ability.



Andy Emert

A musician and luthier at David Kerr Violin Shop in Portland, as well as a music educator, Andy Emert earned music credentials and degrees at Western Oregon University and Portland State University, interspersed with several years of working in Oregon's woods.

He has taught both children and adults to play the fiddle in and around Portland, as well as teaching in workshops at various northwest music festivals.

Emert was featured in an Oregon Public Television YouTube spot during the pandemic in 2020, "A Neighborhood Fiddler," when he performed nightly in his southeast Portland neighborhood.

Emert says Twin Fiddling adds a nice complexity to any tune.

"I will be listening for how the presenters manage this complexity," he said. "Will the harmony be presented in thirds above the melody, or will it jump to fifths and fourths around the melodic line? In addition to staying together, I will be listening for rhythm, timing, tempo, and inventiveness."

In the Swing competition, Emert says he will be listening for intonation, rhythm, timing, and most importantly, groove.

"Groove is the forward momentum of the tune," he added. "A really good swing tune should be toe-tapping, and it should cause the listener to want to dance. I really like the music of Joe Venuti, Johnny Gimble, and Freddie Green."



Jeanine Orme

Born in Ogden, Utah, and attending Weiser for the first time at the age of 8, Jeanine Orme is a past Utah State fiddle champion, Oregon State Adult champion, and has served as a judge at Weiser and other regional and state contests.

Living in Beaverton, Ore., Orme has taught violin and fiddle lessons for over 40 years, as well as teaching workshops and fiddle camps.

Orme's music has been significantly influenced by five-time Grand National Fiddle Champion Herman Johnson, who instructed her in Texas-style fiddling and Western Swing.

She has authored several music books for Mel Bay Publications, Inc., including "The Fiddlin' Workshop"; "The Fiddlin' Workshop for Cello"; "Herman Johnson Master Fiddler"; and "Texas-Style Fiddlin' Workshop."

When judging the Twin Fiddle division, Orme said she will be listening for solid harmony, good tone, and good intonation. "Having bowing in sync is a plus, but the most important thing is seeing players having fun, playin' tunes that are within each player's ability," she said.

In the Swing division she will listen for great rhythm and groove.

"The music should make the listeners want to dance," Orme said. "Players should have good tone and intonation and a good sense of improvising. It is important for the players to have fun because that will make the audience have fun, as well."

from page 9

Fiddlers entertain at World's Fair

an entertaining auctioneer, rodeo announcer, farmer, real estate broker, and Weiser's mayor from 1966-1969.

Over the next two and one-half hours the fiddlers played through a "set" of 42 tunes in front of a crowd of 3,100. Six of the 42 songs were performed by the entire group, while the remainder were played by individuals or pairs/trios of fiddlers.

"That night, each became a link in a chain of fiddle music that will

never be forgotten," the reporter wrote.

The list of musicians reads like a Who's Who of not only Idaho's greatest of the time, but those who influenced and contributed to the betterment of their own communities during their lifetimes.

Accompanists included: Fannie Chandler and Jack Goan, piano; Wendell Ader, Florence Planansky, Delvin Watkins, and Donna Sneed, guitar; Paul Hostetler, banjo; and Ed Uhrig, bass fiddle.

Fiddlers: Allen Rice,

Vivian Alftin, Collie Blevins, Reuben Cole, Ab Womack, Earl Moore, Fay Sneed, Edna Jenkins, Bill Yohey, Rusty Madrell, Rudy Rudger, Clarence Kemble, Olive Fairchild, Hubert Hadley, Slim Beck, Almon Manes, Gladys Frazier, Henry Radermacher, Mannie Shaw, Grant Ader, Larry Sutton, Otis Howard, Ralph Schriver, Perry Sutton, Dolly Tate, Russell Dille, Lennie Baum, Dave Frisbee, Kathy Sutton, Den Durfee, and Dwayne Youngblood.

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- Special Olympics
- Next Chapter Food Pantry
- Oregon Food Bank
- Joe Malay Ho-Ho Express
- Weiser Memorial Hospital Foundation
- Weiser Elks Food Basket Program
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- Weiser Chamber of Commerce
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- Fruitland Chamber of Commerce
- Ontario Chamber of Commerce
- Local Sports Teams
- Weiser Valley Roundup
- Old-Time Fiddlers' Contest and Festival
- Help Them to Hope
- Jr. Golf Foundation
- Treasure Valley Community College
- Boys & Girls Club of Payette & Ontario
- Cambridge Rodeo
- Adams County Fair & Rodeo
- Washington County Fair
- Malheur County Fair & Rodeo
- Payette County Fair
- PCRD - Payette County Recreation District
- St. Luke Hospital Fruitland
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