



COLORADO FIDDLE REPORT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COLORADO OLD TIME FIDDLERS' ASSOCIATION

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www.coloradofiddlers.org

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Summer Contests and Monthly Workshops!

Summer Fiddle Contests: News is trickling in on the upcoming Summer contest season. (As of this writing, COTFA President Denice Carter is in Hallettsville, TX for the Texas State Championship, otherwise known as "Fiddlers' Frolics". We'll have a short write-up on that next issue.)

The third annual Cañon City "Fiddlers Along the Arkansas" contest is on July 14th. The contest will start at 1:30 pm. Go to www.fiddlersalongthearkansas for details as they emerge. Remember that all COTFA sanctioned contests will have a \$5 entry fee for all COTFA members, so check it out. In Montrose, July 25th, details are still being worked out, but the contest is scheduled to happen. We will run more information as soon as we get it.

There is still no confirmation from the folks at the Greeley Stampede. COTFA got work a few months ago that they were going to try their best to hold the contest again, as spectators were interested and entertained, but there is still the budget concern as our economy starts its recovery from the recession.

Vi Wickam's monthly fiddle workshops at Magnolia Music in Old Town Fort Collins are continuing. The cost is \$5 per person or \$10 per family. They are officially called The Five-Dollar Fiddle Workshops. These workshops are always on Thursday nights at 7:00 pm at Magnolia Music. So far the evenings have covered: Fiddling for Violinists, Practical Music Theory, Cross-Tuning and Twin Fiddling. The May workshop is scheduled to be held on May 26th, and will concentrate on practicing; the evening's title is, "Practicing: Getting the Most out of the Time You Spend with Your Instrument". If you are interested in attending, you may call 970-430-6381 (Vi's number) to get any information you need about the workshops.

Workshops like these are a great help to your command of the instrument, and this is why COTFA is so committed to trying to expand membership and to get members to contribute to this newsletter. Any time a player can get together with other musicians it is a learning experience, and it doesn't have to be a workshop, either. We are dedicated to helping communications between all of our members, and in that way to make sure that any opportunity to get together with other players is broadcast so that all may participate.

Next month we'll talk about the guitar workshops that Eischen Harkins puts on once a month. More details will be in that article, but these workshops are geared for all ages, and teach the basics of Texas-style accompaniment. Even if you don't plan on being a back-up player, Eischen stresses that it's a great way to learn about chord progressions and will improve your fiddle playing.

**OLD TIME
FIDDLE CONTEST!**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 1ST 2010

**SEDGWICK COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
★ JULESBURG, COLORADO ★**

**Contest Starts at 10:00 am
Three Classes • Cash Prizes!**

Information: 970-474-9847





The Arkansas Traveler Legend: *From the Little Rock, AR city website.*

The Traveler was exasperated; lost in the woods with night coming on, needing food and shelter for himself and his horse, he had learned exactly nothing in a half-hour's conversation with a sassy Squatter who seemed interested only in endlessly fiddling a single tune.

"What are you playing that tune over so often for?" demanded the Traveler. "Only heard it yesterday. 'Fraid I'll forget it," replied the Squatter. "Why don't you play the second part of it?" "It ain't got no second part." "Give me the fiddle," the Traveler ordered. He tuned it for a moment, then swung into the second part. The Squatter leaped up and began to dance, the sleeping hound awoke and thumped his tail, the children hopped up and down, and even the "old woman" came through the door with a smile twisting unaccustomed muscles on her face.

"Come in, stranger," roared the delighted Squatter. "Take a half a dozen cheers and sot down. Sall, stir yourself 'round like a six-horse team in a mud hole. Go 'round in the holler, whar I killed that buck this mornin', cut off some of the best pieces and fotch it and cook it for me and this gentleman directly. Raise up the board under the head of the bed and git

the old black jug. Dick, carry the gentleman's hoss around under the shed, give him some fodder and corn, as much as he kin eat. Stranger, ef you can't stay as long as you please, and I'll give you plenty to eat and drink. Play away, stranger, you kin sleep on the dry spot tonight!"

So goes the part of the dialogue that accompanies one of the nation's best-known fiddle tunes, "The Arkansas Traveler." The state's historians are generally agreed that both the story (which is narrated, not sung) and the melody were composed by Colonel Sandford C. Faulkner (1803-74). Faulkner, a prominent planter, is supposed to have been inspired by a conversation with a backwoodsman in 1840. A few folklore students have credited the authorship to an Ohio Valley fiddler named Jose Tasso, but Faulkner's claim was so fully recognized during his lifetime that the manager of the old St. Charles Hotel in New Orleans is said to have lettered *The Arkansas Traveler* in gilt above the door of a room reserved for him.

For Vi Wickam's version of this tune, go to page 3 of this month's newsletter.

King Soopers Gift Cards: Support COTFA

COTFA is continuing to offer "reloadable" Gift Cards from King Soopers. Here's how it works: COTFA will be offering Gift Cards, initially at sponsored events and at Denice Carter's fiddle lessons. The great thing is that you may "reload" the card, for as much as \$500 at a time, for use on your trips to the store (it takes just a minute for the Customer Service Counter to do this, or you can now do it right at the register). You may then continue to use and reload the card indefinitely.

Here's how this helps COTFA: Each \$5,000 that is spent using the COTFA-issued cards earns the organization \$250! When you think about how much we all spend per

month at the grocery store, it's easy to see how this simple program can earn our organization much-needed money for all of the events we put on throughout Colorado.

You can use the cards at the following Kroger-affiliated stores: **King Soopers, Kroger, Fred Meyer, Ralphs, Fry's & Fry's Marketplace, Dillons, Smith's Food & Drug, City Market, QFC, Food 4 Less, Owen's, Foodsco, Hilander, Pay-Less, Cala-Bell, Baker's, JayC, Fred Meyer Jewelers, Littman & Barclay Jewelers.**

Please help support the Colorado Old Time Fiddlers' Association and get a gift card today! Contact Marcia deWerd: madewerd@gmail.com



Arkansas Traveler

Traditional

Fiddle

5

10

15

20

25

30

The Arkansas Traveler: Arrangement by Vi Wickam:

“Arkansas Traveler is my arrangement as I played it a few years ago, simplified slightly for one of my intermediate students. I originally picked up the tune from Chuck Onofrio after he beat me in the first fiddle contest I played against him at. Later, I was influenced by Matt Hartz and Major Franklin. This is one of my favorite fiddle tunes, and one of the most under-appreciated.”

Next month we’ll look at Vi’s version of *Who’s Gonna Talk to Dinah* an old Missouri fiddle tune that Vi picked up a few years ago.