The Newsletter of the Saline Fiddlers

Fiddlin' Around

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The Saline Fiddlers Fall Hometown Concert with Guest Artists The Elders

The **Saline Fiddlers** are excited to be hosting their 15th Annual Hometown Concert Saturday, November 1st at the Ellen Ewing Performing Arts Center at Saline High School. The fiddlers are looking foreward to having **The Elders** from Kansas City as their guest artists for this concert.

Since forming in 1998, The Elders (www.eldersmusic.com) have set the American music scene on its ear, thanks to a skillful mix of amped-up roots rock, augmented with powerful vocals, blazing instrumentals and top-notch song writing. The group consists of six wicked-fine Kansas City musicians with a passion for Celtic music, including a charismatic Irishman with a love of all things American. This combination makes for cross-pollination that is high octane and original, yet rooted in tradition.

The Elders continuously attract capacity crowds throughout the United States and abroad. Their fan base is ever-expanding, consisting of people of all ages and from all walks of life, many who follow the band from gig to gig, sometimes driving for hundreds of miles to see their performances.

Tickets for the Hometown Concert range in price from $10 to $20, and can be purchased through the Fiddlers On-Line ticket system (follow the links at: www.salinefiddlers.com or By calling 866-257-5333.

When it comes to Celtic rock bands from Kansas City fronted by a custom cabinet maker, it's safe to bet no group can rival The Elders. -Associated Press January 2007

Meet the new Fiddlers

We're proud to introduce here and at our concerts a talented bunch of new Fiddlers. Five new students have joined the group.

By Cindy O'Brien



Cassandra

A talented freshman joining the group this year is violinist Cassandra.

Cassandra first learned about the Saline Fiddlers when she attended a Hometown Show during her fifth grade year. In seventh grade she got a better understanding of the music after seeing it written out on a music score. Cassandra says, "That is when I became determined to get into the group."



"The most fun about being in the Saline Fiddlers is getting to know people and traveling! I've seen parts of Michigan and Ohio I've never seen before, and I've been to festivals I had never known were there." Her biggest challenge has been mastering the music.

Cassandra's favorite show was the Cadillac Festival of the Arts. She says, "It was my first 'big bus trip' (it was a four hour drive). The stage was beautiful with the Lake Cadillac directly behind it. I was nervous! We stayed the night, and the day after, taught a group of kids 'Buffalo Gals.' It was extremely memorable!"

Cassandra's advice to younger students who want to join the Saline Fiddlers is, "PRACTICE! Don't put it off, no matter how tempting it might be."

In her free time, Cassandra says, "My Mom and I go kickboxing. I recently joined the Saline High School writing club, Writers Ink, because I love to write and read. I play the piano. It's very relaxing! On Sundays, I teach the 4th grade girls at Keystone Community Church. I also like hanging out with friends."



Meredith

The Saline Fiddlers offer a warm welcome to sophomore cellist, Meredith! "Mer," as her friends like to call her, was introduced to the Fiddlers when the Saline Fiddlers performed at former Fiddler Lee Callender's high school graduation party next door to her house. Then and there Meredith decided that the Fiddlers were the "coolest thing since orange Gatorade and I wanted to be just like them! Fiddlers became my ultimate goal."



Since becoming a Fiddler Meredith enjoys time with some of her closest friends. Learning the music is fun, but really understanding it—music theory, history, and composition—is also one of the biggest challenges. She likes the shows in rural locales and appreciates the sense of community and festivity that are evident when rural communities are drawn together for area-wide festivals in small, friendly towns. She also likes the camaraderie of traveling longer distances together with fellow Fiddlers.



Meredith enjoys crew (team boat rowing), ice hockey and photography. She aspires to be an Olympic rower and a professional photographer.

She is "not-so-secretly obsessed with orange Gatorade and Jeep Wranglers" and says she is one of the guys most of the time. According to Meredith, "I love off-roading … Jeeps rock!"

For a student who aspires to be a Saline Fiddler, Meredith advises, "keep your goals in sight and don't let the opportunity slip away. It's a lot of work to get ready; but when times are tough, be strong. You'll be glad you did!"

Welcome, Meredith!

Travis

The Saline Fiddlers are happy to introduce Senior drummer, Travis who has joined us this year!

Travis learned about the Fiddlers from Fiddler violinist Michael. They shared a class together, and Travis asked Michael about the group after noticing the Saline Fiddler t-shirt that Michael was wearing one day. Travis' interest was piqued once Michael told him all about the Fiddlers.



The most enjoyable part of Fiddlers, Travis says, is playing with so many talented people! The challenge of Fiddlers is playing the best he can.

Travis says his favorite performance was the "Jenna's Dream Benefit Show" in Yorktown during the Fiddlers' 2008, East Coast Tour. He enjoyed playing in the theatre and meeting musician Art Halperin and his band, the Work of Art, who were also playing at this show. He especially appreciated the opportunity to be Art Halperin's overnight guest as he provided host housing during this event. Travis said it was "awesome watching them (Work of Art) rehearse."



His advice to aspiring Fiddlers is to be patient in learning the music. "In time, it'll all come together."

Besides drumming from an early age, Travis also is a Saline High School varsity wrestler, wrestling at both the 135 and 140 weight brackets.

Travis will be attending Belmont University School of Music in Nashville, TN, starting Fall, 2009. Go for it, Travis! You'll be great!

Travis aspires to be the hardest working drummer in Saline. We know that he is! We're glad to

Vicky

The Saline Fiddlers are thrilled to have another family member of a previous Fiddler join our ranks! Vicky was inspired by her brother, Alex, a Fiddler alumnus, to become a Fiddler. Vicky says he had a great time as a Fiddler and had some very good friends in the group. She loved coming along to the performances and always wanted to be on stage with the Fiddlers.

Vicky enjoys getting to know the other Fiddlers. She says the bus trips are a great way to have fun and spend time with friends. Vicky also likes Fiddle Camp where the Fiddlers get together each year to learn new music and bond as a group.

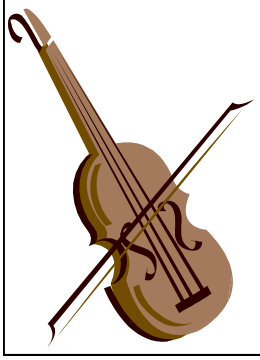
Vicky has found the most challenging aspect of her Fiddler experience is memorizing the new music after passing her initial audition. "There was a lot of music and high speeds, but, wow, it was so worth it!"



When asked about favorite shows, Vicky says, "Dang, I've been to so many gigs! But I'll have to say the Cadillac Festival of the Arts." She especially enjoyed the bus trip, playing the show in the Park, and "the audience was the best!" Vicky also loved working with the young musicians the next day in the workshop.

Her advice for aspiring Fiddlers? Vicky says, "Oh, man, go for it!! You'll be glad you did! Once you make it past your first audition, there's not as much stress. You make friends pretty quickly, and get lots of help with all of the music. But practice. You'll get WAY behind if you don't practice. =) "

Vicky says some of her other interests are "reading, rock climbing with my friends (even though I am not very good at it), playing with my dog and brothers, traveling, scuba diving, hiking, biking… mostly outdoorsy—somewhat athletic stuff."



It's good to have you as a Saline Fiddler, Vicky! Welcome!

Jacob

Freshman Jacob is our newest member, becoming part of the Saline Fiddler Tech Crew.

Jacob attended some Saline Fiddler shows and became very interested in what the tech guys were doing. The Fiddler musicians have to play well, but the tech crew has to take the musicians' sounds, blend them, amplify them, and make them sound great to audiences large and small. Without our tech crew far fewer people would ever hear the Saline Fiddlers. After watching the Saline Fiddler tech crew in action, Jacob wanted to join.

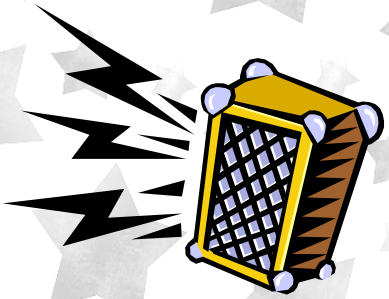
Jacob says it has been fun learning to set up and use the tech equipment. The biggest challenge for Jacob has been memorizing the types of cables and learning how sound gets from the instruments to the speakers.



Jacob's favorite show so far was the Lathrup Village Family Fall Festival. He says, "It was the most exciting trip, because I got to do more hands-on things than I have done at any other show so far."

Jacob's advice to future Fiddlers is to do well in school so they can have the time to enjoy the whole Fiddler experience, and to practice their instruments a lot.

Jacob says his other favorite activities are remote control car racing and hanging out with friends.

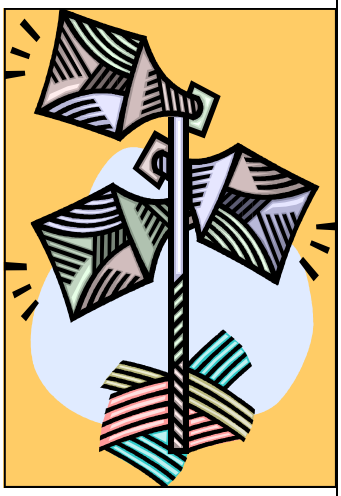




Hi Tech



By Doug Rhine



One key component of each Fiddler performance is the work of the Fiddler sound technicians. These 'men in black' play a vital role behind the scenes, and the Saline Fiddlers have some very special people here who help make the magic happen.

Ian is in his fourth year with the group. As a senior he brings a calm, confident presence to each gig. He has seen the whole range of Fiddler performances and can anticipate the challenges each venue presents. Ian's first big trip with the Fiddlers was in eighth grade as a Fiddler-in-training. The Fiddlers were opening for an award-winning country singer. Ian was invited to accompany the group because it was an opportunity to see a technically complicated performance. The early morning car trip was followed by a full day of set-up, sound checks, waiting, problem solving, and finally a couple performances that lasted past midnight. The Fiddlers returned to their hotel a little after 1:00 am. Ian has always been known in the group for his preference for energy drinks. We sometimes wonder if it was that trip that got him started!

Jack is a junior and also has three years of tech experience under his belt. As the younger student technician for two years, Jack spent a lot of time trouble-shooting problems from the back of the stage. He enjoys sharing time now on the sound board mixing the show. When gremlins cause sound problems, Jack usually knows just where to look to chase them away. Jack is a distance runner and when the tech situation is going smoothly, Jack's next priority is finding out what there is to eat. We are happy to supply a few calories in return for the great job he does.

The newest addition to the Saline Fiddlers tech crew is freshman Jacob. Jacob is in his first month with the Fiddlers and is just learning the ropes, or should we say, the cords. The most basic job of a new Fiddler student technician is learning about the physical set-up of the sound system—where the cords go and what

(Please see **Tech**, page #7)

The Saline Fiddlers 2008 East Coast Tour

Early one morning last June the Saline Fiddlers piled into a bus for another exciting summer tour. The tour led the Fiddlers 2200 miles through 10 states and two Canadian provinces. They shared their music and received a lot in return.

The first day the bus whisked the Fiddlers through Ohio, across Pennsylvania, and on to Sparta, New Jersey. The Fiddlers received a warm welcome from host families who fed them and tucked them into bed for the first night of a two-night stay. The next day Ben Culver and the Saline Fiddlers conducted a fiddling workshop with string students and gave a rousing evening concert for a large crowd from the community.

The following morning the Fiddlers boarded their bus for Yorktown Heights, New York. Craig Schulman, a former Phantom of the Opera tenor, welcomed the Fiddlers with a pool party and





cookout. Drying their hair, the Fiddlers rode to the Yorktown Stage to perform a benefit concert for Jenna's Dream, a local non-profit. An impressive band, Work of Art, opened for the Fiddlers and played host family to a few of the Fiddler guys that night.

The Fiddlers next spent two days exploring New York City. They walked across the Brooklyn Bridge, saw *The Phantom of the Opera* on Broadway, rode the subway to a New York Yankees game, crowded into Times Square, joined the hustle of Grand Central Station and scattered to explore the city in small groups. Fiddlers visited Central Park, the Statue of Liberty, Ground Zero, Wall Street, the United Nations or whatever else they could cram into the time. On the second afternoon they boarded their bus and headed up the coast.



The trip though the Connecticut towns and countryside was appropriately charming. Dinner was provided that evening by the family of former Saline Fiddler Kate. The reunion was a lot of fun but the Fiddlers had to move on that evening to the outskirts of Boston.



On the Fourth of July the Fiddlers headed into Boston. They arrived just in time to hear TV host Craig Ferguson lead the Pledge of

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Beth Bartley, Editor.
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Will Warner, Executive Director
www.salinefiddlers.com



Allegiance for a crowd gathered at the Old State House. Then the Declaration of Independence was read by from the balcony of the Old State House where it was first proclaimed to the people of Boston in 1776.

The Fiddler concert in Quincy Market was cancelled at the last minute because the overcast skies decided it was time for a light drizzle. The Fiddlers were disappointed but a resourceful Fiddler mom was not daunted. She noticed a music festival going on a block away at City Hall. She met the stage manager of the festival and he invited the Fiddlers to play the next afternoon.

The Fiddlers did a little sight seeing then hiked across the Charles River. That evening they listened to the Boston Pops' Concert and watched the fireworks from front row seats along the river.

The next day the Fiddlers took a the Duck Boat Tour of Boston, walked on the Freedom Trail, and returned for their performance at City Hall. The crowd loved the unexpected treat and people exiting a nearby subway station were also drawn to come listen.



After a stop in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a dip in a pool, and an encounter with some lobsters, the Fiddlers pushed on to Boothbay Harbor, Maine. The Fiddlers dropped their luggage at the Tugboat Inn and stayed just long enough to admire the boats tied up along the docks. Their performance that evening at the Boothbay Harbor Opera House was greeted with overwhelming enthusiasm. To celebrate afterwards the Fiddlers walked to a nearby ice cream parlor and indulged with equal enthusiasm.



The following day the Fiddlers left for Vermont. After a lunch stop at Dartmouth College, and another stop for quickly melting ice cream, the Fiddlers pulled into Enosburg Falls. Their generous hosts provided a tasty cookout. The excitement of the Fiddlers' concert that night in the Opera House added a few more degrees to the heat wave passing through the East. It was late when the tired Fiddlers headed for bed with their host families.

The Fiddlers turned toward home the following day taking the shortest route through Canada. The Fiddlers stopped in Montreal and enjoyed the city, then went on and spent the night in Kingston, Ontario. The next day they crossed the Ambassador Bridge into the United States and returned to Saline.

The Fiddlers came home with some great memories. The travel, the enthusiastic audiences and gracious hosts, the time spent together, the work and the fun are part of the Fiddler experience and part of the reward for the students' dedication to the group. The students say thanks to Mr. Culver, the staff, their parents and to the supporters who help keep this wonderful opportunity alive.



Tech

plugs into what. But Jacob is also starting to learn about the complex task of sound engineering—parametric equalizers, compressors, monitor mixes, snakes and subsnakes. Jacob, we wish you luck!

Overseeing our student techs is our Technical Manager, Ed Brosius. Ed has had a long history of involvement with the Fiddlers and has had three daughters pass through the group. Ed knows the Fiddler sound system inside and out and, with the student techs, has disassembled and reassembled parts of the system more times than he would care to count. Ed's attention to detail keeps the system running and his curiosity about all things technical has made him a great instructor to his crew.

The next time you are at a Fiddler performance take a minute to look over the shoulders of our 'men in black', and maybe even give them a pat on the back for a job well done.





From left Ian, Jack, Ed Brosius and Jacob, the newest member of our tech crew.



WHOLE FOODS and SALINE FIDDLERS a Delectable Combo



By Trevor



We had to be at Whole Foods by 8:30 a.m. and set-up outside under the overcast skies with chilly, windy conditions. Now waking up early on a Saturday morning is never a good thing when you're a teenager, but on September 27th it turned out to be SWEET!!! The Grand Opening Gig at Whole Foods was a good thing! The steady flow of customers, the maize and blue fans and the Whole Foods employees were an appreciative audience. We were fiddling away and before long, the sun was shining and toes were tapping.

Also to our pleasant surprise, each Fiddler was given a gift card to eat lunch. WOW!
Fiddlers love to eat good food almost as much as we love to perform. So all around this was a win-win event and I recommend you stop in for a Whole Foods experience.





Performing on the back of a flat bed truck in Carey Ohio

SALINE Fiddlers

Ben Culver, Artistic Director

Will Warner, Executive Director
Brad Phillips, Assistant Artistic Director
Doug Rhine Event Manager
Mark Visovatti, Administrative Manager
Ed Brosius, Technical Manager
Mark Kuykendall, Business Manager
Sheila Graziano, Choreographer
Dianne Newberry, Vocal Coach

For bookings call: 1-866-257-5333

www.salinefiddlers.com

Upcoming Public Events

- October 25 , **Grayling Promotional Association Concert Series** , 6:00 pm, Grayling High School , Grayling, MI
  Visit: www.graylingchamber.com
- November 1, **15th Annual Fall Hometown Concert** Featuring guest artists **The Elders,** 7:00 pm, Ellen Ewing Auditorium, Saline High School, Saline, MI
  Visit: www.eldersmusic.com
- November 15, **PIX Theater,** 7:30 pm, 172 West Nepessing Street, Lapeer, MI,
  Visit: www.pixlapeer.org
- December 6, **Saline Holiday Parade,** 7:00 pm after the parade, Historic Union School, 200 North Ann Arbor Street, Saline, MI
  Visit: www.salinechamber.com/calendar.htm
- December 31, **Kalamazoo New Year's Fest,** 5:30, 7:30 and 9:30 pm, First Presbyterian Church, 321 W. South Street, Kalamazoo, MI
  Visit: www.newyearsfest.com

Watch for new gigs to be added weekly.
For the latest info visit our website:
www.salinefiddlers.com

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To

TRIVIA

Which new Saline Fiddler participated in the French Foreign Exchange Program and was forced, as a result, to try Escargots (Snails).

