Fiddlin' Around

The Saline Fiddlers

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18th Annual Fall Hometown Show

by Drew Hart

Saturday, November 5th, 7:00 pm
Saline High School Auditorium
1300 Campus Parkway
Saline, MI 48176
For Tickets, call 866-257-5333
or go to www.salinefiddlers.com
Tickets are $10, $15 & $20



Yep, it's that time of year again. No, I'm not talking about it being football season (as cool as this is). Nor am I talking about it being the time of year when our kids are back in school (even cooler!). Rather, it's the time of year when our very own Saline Fiddlers are getting ready for their *Fall Hometown Show* on **Saturday, November 5th** in the Ellen Ewing Performing Arts Center at Saline High School.

This fall's Hometown Show is shaping up to be a great one and will be well worth attending. The Fiddlers have added new tunes to their mix and have perfected the songs they have learned throughout the summer. One of the new tunes is written by long-time contributor and Fiddler alum, Jesse Mason. In fact, he was able to spend a day with them at the August Fiddler summer camp, providing his immediate feedback and direction. As one Fiddler put it, *"How cool was that!"*

The special guest artists for this year's concert are members of the 'vintage jazz band' **Shout Sister Shout.** As a band, they're relatively new on the music scene, but the members themselves have been around a long time. The *Shout Sister Shout* quintet is a 2009 marriage of singing phenom Rachael Davis and the quartet, *Steppin' In It*. This is how the Metro Times (of Detroit) described them:

> *"The quintet is a tribute to the smoky, sophisticated sound of the 1930's and 40's jazz, with plenty of influence from Cole Porter, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Nat King Cole Trio, and Sarah Vaughan, and it's a trip to hear Davis channel those old greats. Of course it doesn't hurt to have a bunch of guys playing the heck out of vintage instruments as backup."*

Once again, Shar Music will present their instrument Petting Zoo for anyone who would like to touch, feel, play a stringed instrument! The Petting Zoo will be in the hallway outside the auditorium beginning at 6:00 pm and continuing through intermission.

So, mark the date! We will see you there for a fantastic show!

Staff Changes

Mark Kuykendall (father of Brad, violin, 2011) and the Fiddlers' Financial Manager for several years has accepted an invitation to sit on the Saline Fiddlers' Board of Directors. He will be joining Peggy Rzepka, Amy Armstrong, Becky Pazkowski, Louise Grondin-Visovatti, and Board President, Bonnie Leutheuser. Congratulations Mark and thank you for your years of money management!

We welcome back **Lynda Shea**, former Fiddler parent (mother of Daniel, bass, 2008) and former Booking Agent and Financial Manager. Lynda will be taking over Mark Kuykendall's responsibilities as Financial Manager. Lynda says, *"I'm looking forward to meeting the new Fiddlers and getting reacquainted with the old Fiddlers."* Thank you, Lynda, and welcome back!

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Andrew
Guitar

Welcome sophomore guitarist Andrew! Andrew first became intrigued with The Saline Fiddlers while in middle school Fiddle Club. He says, *"I wanted to become a better guitarist and have an opportunity to perform with my guitar."*

Andrew loves having friends with whom to travel and play music all the time. He has found the most challenging thing about the Fiddlers is memorizing all the music. He advises students that are interested in Fiddlers to *"just work through the music, even if it gets hard; and don't be afraid to join, because you can still do other activities."*

Andrew plays the coronet in the school marching band and is on the crew team. He is a Boy Scout, currently pursuing Eagle rank. He likes to snow board and long board, and his hobbies include drawing and playing Warhammer and Dungeons and Dragons.

An interesting thing about Andrew is he has lived much of his life outside the US. He lived in Mexico City from the ages of 2 to 4 years and then in Beijing, China from 2nd through 6th grade where he attended The Western Academy of Beijing.



Philip
Sound Technician

We are excited to introduce our newest student Sound Technician, freshman Philip!

Philip first became aware of the Fiddlers when his older brother tried out for the group as a drummer five years ago. Even though his brother didn't join after all, Philip's interest was caught and he wanted to be part of it.

Philip has had a lot of fun on the car rides to and from the gigs. He particularly liked the Blueberry Festival gig because it was his first bus trip. He has enjoyed getting to know everyone. His biggest challenge as a Sound Tech has been trouble shooting the sound system when something goes wrong. His advice to future Fiddlers? *"Be completely prepared for auditions."*

Philip is an admirer of Shirley Temple. He marvels at what an accomplished actress she was at such an early age and then in her adult life as a US diplomat.

When Philip isn't working with the Fiddler sound equipment, he enjoys listening to music and writing. He also enjoys playing various instruments; his favorites are bass, drums and guitar.



Tristan
Bass

Introducing our new talented bass player, freshman Tristan! Tristan first saw The Saline Fiddlers at a 2008 Hometown Show and really enjoyed it. Then he attended the 2010 CD Release Party of Kaleidoscope (the Fiddlers 9th recording) in downtown Saline and he was sold—he had to be a Fiddler. So Mr. Culver hooked him up with Eric, the Fiddlers' current bass player for tutoring.

Tristan says that the most fun thing about the Fiddlers is, *"either the people in the group or the bus trips. The Blueberry Festival has been the best gig so far because we got to ride on the tour bus and it was fun going to a different part of the US."*

Tristan would tell students who are interested in fiddling that, *"they should do it because it gives you a chance to play different music and you have a really great time."*

Tristan's mom likes to call him by his middle name, "Alejandro." He got some good natured teasing about it when he was in middle school because Lady Gaga had just released a song by that same name.

Tristan also enjoys drawing and hanging out with friends. He also likes to fiddle around with other instruments that he has. He is considering joining the track team in the spring.



Andrew
Violin

We are proud to introduce Andrew, a freshman violinist! Andrew first saw The Saline Fiddlers at a gig in downtown Saline when he was a little kid and was immediately interested. Years later, he was finally able to become a part of it.

Like most new Fiddlers, Andrew has found that learning and memorizing all the music a little overwhelming at first, but it eventually gets easier. He really enjoyed joining the older Fiddlers at the end of the summer tour in Northern Michigan *"because we got to spend lots of time together."* Andrew's favorite gig so far has been at the Blue Water Fest in Port Huron, *"because we played on such a big stage and there were lots of people."* Andrew would tell aspiring Fiddlers to *"just practice and perfect the audition music—and not to be too nervous."*

Aside from playing the violin, Andrew also plays the piano and guitar, and even sings a little. He is part of a show choir called Saline Varsity Blues. Andrew also enjoys playing tennis and skiing. You might be interested to know that Andrew once shared Thanksgiving dinner with US Olympic swimmer, Michael Phelps.

A few final words from Andrew, *"I'm proud to be a Saline Fiddler."*



George
Cello

Welcome to freshman cellist, George! George first became interested in The Saline Fiddlers when he heard his orchestra teacher talk about it in class. Since his teacher is Mr. Culver, the Artistic Director of The Saline Fiddlers, he figured he knew what he was talking about!

George says it has been challenging to memorize all the music, but it has been really fun meeting all the Fiddlers. He would advise a prospective young Fiddler to, *"DO IT! It is a lot of work but a lot of fun."*

George was excited to join the older Fiddlers at the end of the summer tour to perform at the Crystal Mountain Resort. He says, *"It is our family vacation spot, so it was special to have a gig there."*

George is also on the school freshman football team, and is involved in Boy Scouts, wrestling and Tae-Kwon-Do. You might be surprised (impressed, more likely) that he is a second degree black belt.



Garrik
Cello

A warm welcome to freshman Garrik! Not only has Garrik been playing cello since 5th grade, but he enjoyed Fiddle Club for three years and attended many Fiddler shows. His cello tutor was a Fiddler and she sparked his interest in becoming a Fiddler himself. He says, *"I wanted to play the cello and perform."*

Garrik says there are many fun things about being a Fiddler, *"I have new friends—they are a great bunch of kids that have a lot in common, and we travel to different places."* But challenges come along with that, such as *"all the music to learn and memorize, and sometimes the fingering and rhythms are really hard; also, becoming comfortable with singing, dancing and playing in front of a lot of people."* If a young strings player were to ask him for advice, he would tell him/her, *"work hard, practice a lot, be determined and have fun!"*

When not cheering for Ohio State or indulging his love of fast rollercoasters, Garrik runs cross country and track on the school team, is involved in his church youth group and is a Boy Scout working toward his Eagle rank. He also enjoys bicycling, camping, snow sports and spending time with friends and family.

The Fiddlers Perform at the Detroit Institute of Arts

by Taña



The Fiddlers performing at the DIA backed by "The Detroit Industry" fresco style mural, painted by Diego Rivera in 1932-33

It was a magical night as the lights of the Detroit Institute of Arts shone on the works of the revered Mexican artist, Diego Viera, and the elite musical art of the Saline Fiddlers, Friday, June 24, in the "Diego Rivera Court."

Diego Rivera was born in Guanajuato, Mexico in 1886. He began to study painting at an early age, and in 1907 moved to Europe in search of a new form of painting that would express the "every day" and still reach a wide audience. In Italy, he found his medium.....the fresco.

A fresco is a group of related mural paintings executed on fresh plaster on walls or ceilings. Diego painted "The Detroit Industry" fresco style mural at the DIA as a tribute to the city's manufacturing base and labor force of the 1930's. He completed the twenty seven panel work in eleven months from April 1932 to March 1933.

The Fiddlers, dressed in their finest, entertained the overflowing crowd against the backdrop of Diego's north wall automotive mural. This mural represents the culmination of the automobile manufacturing process -- the production of the car's exterior. And, the Fiddlers showed off the culmination of a year of their hard work, as this was their final concert before their summer tour.

The rhythm section was on risers! Even though one always hears their great sounds, the rhythm section is often difficult to see, because they usually perform behind the other performers. Because of the risers at this show, the audience could enjoy all the antics and fun expressions of the rhythm section members. They are a fun group of guys, but I am biased as my son is the new bass player!

The rest of the group played, sang, and danced with the same amount of excellence and energy. We were even treated to an improvised solo by Mr. Culver during "Blackberry Blossom."

Diego's "Industry" mural is considered the finest example of Mexican mural art in the US, and Diego thought it the best work of his career. I am sure he would have enjoyed hearing such wonderful musical art being played against his favorite fresco pieces!

SUMMER FIDDLE CAMP

by Susan Cummings



The Fiddlers at The Emrich Retreat Center

The annual Summer Fiddle Camp, which began on the morning of Thursday, August 4 and ran through the afternoon of Sunday, August 7, was held this year at The Emrich Retreat Center on the outskirts of Brighton. The Emrich Retreat Center is a beautiful, secluded facility with plenty of space for cooking, eating, sleeping, playing, AND fiddling!

What is the purpose of summer camp?

Summer camp is always a "first." It is always the first time a new group of Fiddlers work together without the newly graduated seniors. It is a time of bonding and building new friendships. It is a time of figuring out who will fill whose shoes and integrating the desires and talents of the current Fiddlers into a lively, well designed show. Says Assistant Artistic Director Brad Phillips, *"Summer Fiddle Camp is always nerve-wracking at first. The seniors that just left are always so strong and we worry about how we will get along without them. But then the other kids step up and after a couple of days, we all realize that it's going to be okay."*

It is also a time for introducing new music. The songs the Fiddlers play are all either original pieces written specifically for them or old songs that have been specially arranged for a fiddle group. Six pieces were prepared for camp and after working with them, two were put on the back burner for more tweaking.



Dasha and Andrew working with the group on new music

The first piece was arranged by Jesse Mason (Fiddler alum 1998). He originally put it together for Millish (a local group based in Ann Arbor) and it was titled "Chemiforte." He reworked it for the Fiddlers and renamed it "The Warehouse." It starts out with a slow Irish reel as the melody, complimented by a contemporary harmony and rhythm; it then transitions to an Irish air and finishes with a set of traditional Irish reels.

The fun, feel good piece "Mr. Sandman" was arranged by David Rhine (Fiddler alum 2007) to follow the success of his arrangement of "Lollipop" in 2009. Both those songs were first performed by The Chordettes and were their two biggest hits – "Mr. Sandman" in 1954 and "Lollipop" in 1958.

The next two songs came about after a meeting of the Fiddlers' music directors to discuss what songs they would like to hear the Fiddlers perform. These two songs were both suggestions from Reid Smith and then arranged by Brad Phillips. Reid has always been a big fan of "Box #10," first released in 1972 by Jim Croce, and also of the epic bluegrass song, "Old Dangerfield," a 1981 Bill Monroe piece. To write/arrange that second tune, Brad says, *"I had to do some research—starting with watching and listening to YouTube videos, which gave me musical starting points. Then I filled in the rest and wound up with my own version of the melody."*

The Fiddlers immediately perform this new music at their first gig after camp, which is often only a day or two later. Many Fiddlers agree that this gig is often sad because it is their first gig without the graduated seniors, and it is really hard because they play all the new music that they JUST learned!"



Sound Technicians Philip and JJ with Tech Intern Kevin Carnahan

What do the Sound Technicians do at camp?

They don't just sit around! Not only do they participate in the Buffalo Gals dance instruction (yes, our Sound Techs can dance), they use this time to organize, label, repair, update and perfect the Fiddler equipment and sound system. They will ask to be taken out to obtain materials to repair or build storage bins so the equipment can be safely moved about and stored on the truck, and make lists of needed electrical components to replace lost or damaged items and a myriad of other miscellaneous things that one would never imagine are needed to provide the quality show that we have come to know and expect. Thank you for Sound Technicians!

Once a Fiddler, Always a Fiddler!

Thank you to the Fiddler Alumni who arranged music and spent time at camp to help out—Kevin Carnahan (2010), Jesse Mason (1998), David Rhine (2007), Jacob Visovatti (2009), Brad Kuykendall (2011), Brad Phillips (2003 and Assistant Artistic Director), and Scott Kendall (2006).

Superheroes, S'mores, and Square Dancing

by Amelia, Violin, class of 2013

Do you ever wonder how the Saline Fiddlers are able to present a polished show year-round, while adding new music to our repertoire in order to produce a dynamic performance that audiences both young and old love? I'm here to tell you the well-kept secret of how we do it.

Truth is, we're all superheroes. Our trick for managing to create and maintain an entertaining concert all year round is our secret time-bending abilities, which let us add hours to a day whenever we're running short.

Well, actually…not quite. (It would be nice, though.) But if you consider the ability to log twenty-four hours (that's a full day!) of rehearsal time in about three days a superpower, then yes, we are all superheroes. Because that's exactly what we do—twice a year—at our Fiddle Camps. We hold both a summer and winter Fiddle Camp every year and at those camps we put many, many hours into learning and memorizing new songs, polishing our old tunes as well, and perfecting our stage skills.

Now, don't think that we don't have any time to play in between all of that work. Let's do the math: We're at camp for about 72 hours, subtract 24 of those for rehearsal, and we're still left with 48 hours. We use those 48 hours for eating, sleeping, and free time. And what do we Fiddlers do with our free time? Well, we mostly like to hang out with each other! This includes many activities, such as "jamming" with each other's instruments, going for runs, playing card games, or just plain sitting around and chatting. At summer camp, there's usually a bonfire and s'mores in the evening, and, of course, the annual nighttime Capture the Flag game!

My personal favorite annual tradition at summer Fiddle Camp is the learning and teaching of the Buffalo Gals dance. I'm sure that many of you have seen what we like to call "square dancing cut in half" and perhaps have been curious as to where we learned the dance. Well, I'm not sure who we learned it from way back in the beginning, but now it is custom that we learn, practice, and memorize all of the steps for the Buffalo Gals dance at camp. Though we all do enjoy rehearsing, we also enjoy some good ol' square dancing cut in half as well!

At the beginning of each camp, the task at hand—learning anywhere from four to six new songs and brushing up on many old songs—can seem very daunting. But when we focus, put in our best effort, work together, and remember to enjoy ourselves—what could easily be "work" quickly turns into "fun", and the feeling of teamwork and achievement that results is priceless.





At the Peg Egan Performing Arts Center in Egg Harbor, WI

On the Road with The Saline Fiddlers

by Mellissa, Violin, Class of 2013

I loved the Land O' Lakes summer tour which was ten fun-packed days of sightseeing, bonding, and most importantly sharing our music.

Each venue provided a new experience, and whether it was a large or small crowd, we performed with high energy and enthusiasm. Of the many unique and memorable performances, my favorite was the show at Jackson Square Park in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The hot summer weather didn't stop the crowd from coming to see us perform, and it certainly didn't stop them from clapping along with the show. After the performance the Saline Fiddlers had the privilege of meeting the Mayor of Green Bay, James Schmitt. This was exciting, and the Fiddlers are very grateful for special opportunities like these made possible on our tours!

Even though we were busy with performances, we managed to find time to bond as a group. On the long bus rides, we broke out the coloring books and crayons. As it turns out, members of our group are very artistic. The bus rides also included group sing-a-longs to tunes from Fiddler on the Roof and a tune called "The Sun is a Mass of Incandescent Gas." We spent time together at Mount Olympus Water Park and had a barbecue alongside the beach at Peninsula State Park. Many of the female members of our group particularly enjoyed shopping along the Magnificent Mile in Chicago and our sports fanatics had the opportunity to tour Lambeau Field, home of the Green Bay Packers. Other favorite times spent together were visiting the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay and riding the Wild Thing Jet Boats in the Wisconsin Dells.

A special thanks to all our sponsors and donors for making our tour possible. It will be an experience that I will always remember!"



Both photos to the left: Fiddlers learning the Buffalo Gals dance at summer camp

photos by Victoria

"Land O' Lakes" Summer Tour

by John Wharton



The Saline Fiddlers had another successful summer tour, this year traveling to Wisconsin and northern Michigan. They carried on the proud tradition as musical ambassadors from Saline, receiving standing ovations at six very different venues. The bus tour began on June 27 with a stop in Chicago where they divided into groups to visit the zoo, the history museum, Navy Pier and shopping.

The next two days were spent in the scenic Wisconsin Dells, enjoying the Mt. Olympus Water Park and a fast, very wet ride on the Wild Thing Jet Boat to view the sandstone rock formations of the Dells of the Wisconsin River. The Fiddlers first performance was in Fond du lac in front of a large audience at the Buttermilk Creek Park Amphitheater, nestled in a large, grassy, hilly park.

The next day the Fiddlers traveled to Green Bay where they performed in a beautiful open green at Jackson Square Park, followed by visits to the National Railroad Museum and Lambeau Field, home of the Green Bay Packers. From there they traveled to Sheboygan where they performed at the Fountain Park in the center of town. That day also included a visit to the Airventure Museum (housing a display of over 150 historical and experimental aircraft) in Oshkosh as well as a visit to the majestic sand dunes and beach of Kohler-Andrae State Park.

On the sixth day the Fiddlers went to Peninsula State Park in Door County, Wisconsin where, in addition to kayaking and other watercraft, they enjoyed a picnic prepared by Fiddler parents. They then went to Egg Harbor to perform at the Peg Egan Amphitheater, where the enthusiastic audience enjoyed the Fiddlers play, sing and clog with a beautiful sunset in the background.

The next day the Fiddlers took the S.S. Badger ferry from Manitowoc, WI across Lake Michigan and docked in Tustin, MI. Adding to the enjoyment of the relaxing four-hour, 60-mile cruise, a group of the Fiddlers got out their instruments and gave an impromptu concert for the other passengers. That night was spent at the rustic Kettunen Center Lodge, where the Fiddlers enjoyed movie night (including pop corn!)

The Fourth of July was spent in Lake City, MI where the Fiddlers gave a rousing concert to a very large crowd filling City Park Stage next to Missaukee Lake. The local police accommodated us by providing a place for the bus to park right next to the lake and allowed us to stay through the evening with a "front-row seat" to watch the large fireworks display over the lake.

The next day the Fiddlers traveled to the Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville, MI where they gave a well-received last performance for guests at the resort. They also had time to enjoy the Alpine slide, swimming and other activities at the resort, as well as a home-cooked spaghetti dinner prepared by Fiddler parents.

The Fiddlers returned to Saline on July 6. Congratulations to the Fiddlers and a big thanks to the drivers, chaperones and Fiddler parents who made this another great tour.



On the Wild Thing Jet Boat in the Wisconsin Dells

Hands Across the Water

The City of Saline had the privilege of hosting visitors from their sister city, Lindenberg, Germany, in September. This was especially meaningful to the Saline Fiddlers, as they had been hosted by the Lindenberg community during their 2009 Summer Tour. The Fiddlers remember fondly the superb hospitality of the community and the families with whom they stayed. The highlight of the tour was the farewell concert in the Lindenberg Town Square. The square was packed with their new friends and Lindenberg residents. Many Fiddlers remember this as their all-time favorite show, where they gave a record number of four encores to the enthusiastic crowd! The Fiddlers were happy to perform again for the German guests during their 2011 visit to Saline at the Oktoberfest on September 24, in downtown Saline.

The Fiddlers will also be performing on October 15th for the Brecon Friendship group at The Stone Arch in downtown Saline while they enjoy the dessert portion of their progressive dinner. Once again the Fiddlers are looking forward to being goodwill ambassadors and sharing their unique fiddling style and talents with another of Saline's sister cities.

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With Hank, the Blueberry Guy at the Blueberry Festival in Plymouth, Indiana

Ben Culver……..	**…...Artistic Director**
Brad Phillips……	Assistant Artistic Director
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Sheila Graziano……..	……..Choreographer
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Opportunities to See The Fiddlers
Go to www.salinefiddlers.com for details

Saturday, September 17, 4:00 pm
Northville Victorian Festival
Northville, MI

Saturday, September 18, 1:30 & 3:30 pm
Flat Rock Creek Fall Festival
Paulding, OH

Saturday, September 24, 3:30pm
Saline Harvest of the Arts Oktoberfest
Saline, MI

Saturday, October 2, 3:00 pm
Thumb Friends of the Arts Concert Series
Sebewaing, MI

Saturday, October 8, 1:00 & 3:00 pm
Kapnick Apple Orchard Festival
Britton (Tecumseh), MI

Saturday, November 5th, 7pm
18th Annual Fall Hometown Show
Saline High School Auditorium

Saturday, December 10, 7:30 pm
Monroe Community College Holiday Show
Monroe, MI

Sunday, December 18, 3:00 pm
Holiday Concert Series, Kalamazoo, MI

Saturday, January 22, 3:00 pm
Winter Blues Busters Show, Clarkston, MI

Saturday, February 5, 7:30 pm
Pix Theater, Lapeer, MI