

The Squeeky Bow

January/February 2024



Official Newsletter of Nevada Old-Time Fiddlers Association

Welcome to the Squeeky Bow, a news letter for the Nevada Old-time Fiddlers members to be published on the Website to be enjoyed by anyone interested in our Club. Articles of any interest are welcome from anyone inside or outside the Club.

SUNSHINE REPORTING (HEALTH UPDATES ON MEMBERS)

Bill Thornhill returned to Mayo, Rochester, Minnesota, for an eight month check-up after having an aggressive #2 cancer mass removed. The tests were clean after getting the last results from the blood test where no ctDNA (baby cancer cells) were found. Told one more test in 6 months and if the same results will not want to see him for 2 years

FIDDLERS PLAYING AROUND

March 23: Saturday, Music Festival at the Firelight Barn, 546 S Boulder Hwy, Henderson, NV 89015. There are two performances, 11:00am to 11:30am and again at 12:00pm to 12:30pm

March 30: Fifth Saturday Jam at Paul and Kathy DePatta's residence, 8041 Bradley Road, Las Vegas Nevada 89131
Festivities start at 10:00am.

April 13: City of Las Vegas Bluegrass Festival, Centennial Hills Park, 11:45am to 12:30pm.

May 17 & 18: Nevada State Old-Time Fiddler's Contest, Eureka Opera House, Eureka, Nevada.

EUREKA NEVADA FIDDLER'S CONTEST

The Nevada Old-Time Fiddler's contest is an opportunity for the Nevada Old-time Fiddlers to make an appearance before Nevada and the other states involved making everyone aware of our Club and our activities. The President says that should NOFA not, he will pay gas and entry fee to the tune of \$200 per participant. May is coming fast. Make sure the our Club is aware of your intentions..



BASS PRO SHOP

The Bass Pro Shop has had a great turnout since starting this year. Last week (Feb 8) even had the crowd dancing at the entrance to the Store.



MIRA LOMA ASSISTED LIVING

Mira Loma Jam has great turnout both from the fiddles and the residents. Let's keep up the good work..



LAS VEGAS OLD-TIME FIDDLER'S CONVENTION

Paul DePatta planted the seed of an Old-time Fiddlers Convention being held here by our Club. This has such great potential that a NOFA committee has been formed to investigate the possibilities. Stay tuned.

HISTORY OF AMERICAN FIDDLE STRINGS (BY NEVADA OLD-TIME FIDDLERS) ARTICLE #2

The year is 1800 with no electricity. Manufacturing is very limited compared to today's standards. You need fiddle (violin) strings and there is only one choice, sometimes called cat gut, that is actually sheep intestine. The 50' long gut must be harvested while the intestines are still warm. They are immediately cleaned, scraped and immersed in cold water for twelve hours. then in tepid water for four hours. They are again scraped and further cleaned under running water before being placed in jars to soak in potassa lye. Once removed they are scraped with a thimble like device on the thumb to remove the last remaining fragments, placed back in the jar where the process is repeated three more times. After this last time they are placed into a weak solution of sulfuric acid. The guts are now sorted according to size. Thicker guts will be split.

Next operation is spinning. The fibers are fairly small so two or three or more, according to the string size desired, are gathered and put on a spinning rack about eight feet long. These bundles are twisted to a desired tension and when nearly dried are placed in a sulphur bath. Back on the rack the strings are dried, rubbed with clay, grass, camel hair. Repeat this process a few more times. Then rub with oil and polish.

Most strings during the 18th and 19th centuries were imported from Italy.

Gut strings have been found as far back as the the pyramids. Gut was the only source of strings until the 1940's when the switch to steel strings was made. Attached video shows the gut strings being made in our times.

https://youtu.be/UJ_tky1_g3k?si=Sx1qQA0Jr-w6cTHo



DO YOU KNOW THIS FIDDLE SONG?
My Lodging is on the Cold Cold Ground
<https://youtube.com/watch?v=dYtonVlv-Ao>

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

This years turnouts have been remarkable. The first four or five months of activity planned, I believe, should result in more interest in in our club and with more members we should be able to share more of the duties. Please see the list below and let me know if you have any interest of those listed.

Team work on any level is needed to assist in getting our club back on level ground.....

- Work on advertising
- Finding places for performances
- Helping making FaceBook active
- Ideas on improving our music for our audiences
- Articles of interest for publication
- Taking photos of events
- Setting up or Packing up at events

How can YOU assist? I have a list for anyone wanting to help and not knowing what to do..... All suggestions for improvement will be considered..... Thank You

Bill Thornhill