

On campus

Young and old "fiddlin'" around for fun

By J. Dana Haynes
Of the Print

The Community Center reverberated with the strains of bluegrass last Sunday, as the Oregon OldTime Fiddlers held their monthly jam. This is the fourth jam to be held at the College, and the turnout was commendable.

I would be difficult to describe the average participant at the jam. They ranged from age 5 to 82, and came dressed in cowboy hats and skimmers, denim duds and suitcoats. There was even a guest appearance by one Claus, Santa.

This was not the first fiddlers ball to be held on campus. There have been four jams here, including last year's Christmas jam and the last two annual state contests. Next year's contest is slated to be held here as well.

The reason so many of the get-togethers are held at the college is due to one member in particular: Helen Hakanson, the wife of the College President.

"I've been a member for three years now," Mrs. Hakanson said, "These jams are good for the campus. They bring

people up here and make them feel comfortable. And it's a good place for the fiddlers, because it's large enough to handle a lot of people."

There are forty members of the local fiddlers organization, District 7, which encompasses most of the Portland metropolitan area. State-wide, there are several hundred members. Approximately 40 fiddlers showed up to show their stuff Sunday, along with banjos, basses, ukeleles and a piano.

Most of the players were familiar to each other, and often old friends. One member of the group showed up in a full white beard, red clothes, and a red hat. Herman Classen was every bit the perfect Saint Nick, except for his cowboy boots.

Unlike most of the fiddlers, Classen makes and plays his own violins. "When I retired, I wanted to do something that wasn't too easy but that I didn't have to sweat to do," he said, "I don't make fiddles at any specific pace; I'm just killing time."

So far, Classen has made 23 violins. He has been with the Old Time Fiddlers for four years. Last Sunday, he played two numbers on a fiddle he'd made with his own hands.

Another member there was John Melnichuk, who is the current state champion fiddler. He has been playing with this group for a decade, and before that played in Montana.

"It's always the same, no matter what state you're in," Melnichuk explained, "Everyone's just here to enjoy the music. It's always a lot of fun."

Melnichuk has been fiddling for some time. "I used to play in dance bands when I was going to school. That was how I payed my tuition. Now, I'm trying to make a living with Pacific Power and Light. I just do this for a hobby."

Unlike many people, Melnichuk has passed his hobby onto his child. His daughter Katy was the youngest member at the jam, at the age of five.

"She's been playing for about six months," Melnichuk said, "As a matter of fact, she and I just got through a discussion about which number she'll play. She already knows several."

Many fiddlers seem to agree that the younger the student, the quicker they pick it up. One participant in the low-key festivities was Dale Carothers, who travelled all the way from Oklahoma to visit his

daughter in Troutdale, when he heard about this jam and decided to join in.

"I've taught quite a few of the younger ones," Carothers said, "They definitely learn quicker than older kids do. I took lessons in 1925, myself."

Unlike a majority of those playing Sunday, Carothers has been to the nationals competition several times. "Y'see, I'm from Oklahoma," he explained, "All the good fiddlers come from our chapter. I've won about four prizes, but not the first prize."

The Oklahoma chapter is different than the Oregon ones. "We play about four times a week, at senior citizens' centers," he said. Carothers has travelled across the United States and joined jams in as many states as he could.

"It's hard to go from state to state to find the fiddling association. There should be some sort of directory, but there isn't," Carothers lamented. "Usually, I just check in with local music stores and try to find one fiddler who can show me where to go."

The entire jam lasted approximately three hours, with anyone who wanted to get up on the risers with whatever accompaniment they required.

Mrs. Hakanson played "I don't Love Nobody" and "Under the Double Eagle."

"I really love fiddle music," Mrs. Hakanson said, "It's passed down in families, and some of it isn't even written down; it's just passed on and played by ear."

When asked what the difference is between fiddle playing and playing a violin, Hakanson said, "There's a subtle difference between a violin player and a fiddler. It's not just the pieces you play, it's the way you play them."

Suddenly, Mrs. Hakanson stopped and cocked her head to oneside, "You hear him slide off that note?" she asked, looking at the elderly man on stage, who was playing "Rose of San Antone." "A violinist won't do that, just slide off the note and on to the next. But that's what gives you your fiddling sound. He makes it cry."

Hakanson explained that there are several variations of bluegrass fiddling music, including Irish, Appalachian, Canadian and Texan, and they

are all experiencing a resurgence of popularity. "Even Senator Byrd, Minority Leader, is a fiddler. I have one of his albums," she said.

EMT-1 students learn basics of first aid

By Darla Weinberger
Of the Print

Emergency Medical Technician or EMT-1, is a class designed for those interested in becoming a fire fighter, ambulance technician, or rescue aid.

"It involves training people to perform in what we call the 'basic life support level.' The participants learn to maintain and do mandatory operations before the ambulance arrives and when the victim is

transported to the hospital-emergency room," explained Carol Peterson, EMT instructor.

"They do such things as clear obstructed air ways, administer oxygen or CPR, apply anti-shock techniques, and stabilize injuries.

According to Peterson, EMT-1 students will "primarily work for a fire department or rescue squad. Most ambulance companies in this area will now hire on the promise of further training."

The class is a 90-hour course, with 10 hours in the field. Five hours are spent in an

emergency room situation and going on emergency calls with an ambulance or fire squad.

"In the class, we practice putting on splints, bandages and CPR," Peterson related. "I feel it's more important for a person to get a 'hands on' type of experience. More can be learned by applying CPR on a mannequin than sitting and listening to me talk."

EMT-1 class originated at the college because "the need was demonstrated in the community. There are fire fighters and other personnel that need the class. We (the college) had the best position to offer the

class," Peterson said.

"One term is little time to get in what they need. We really have to work at it, and concentrate. It's really intense, people have to put forth an effort to do this course," she added.

"Many local physicians and other experts come in and teach the technical aspects of the class," she explained. "For example, an anesthesiologist gave a lecture on breathing obstructions and foundations of the respiratory system."

"I think we have some of the best information," she said. "Doctors who receive patients, to tell the students things they like to see done. It gives the

students a chance to become familiar with local doctors and the people patient situations."

Students are certified through a state exam, she said. "We educate and train them, then the state certifies them when they successfully complete our program. What they do is find a suitable location and set up the facilities throughout the state."

"At the time we started the program there were very few women, now we have 8 or 9 out of 22 students. We have a number of women getting involved in rescue work either paid or as volunteers."

The EMT course will be repeated in the spring term.

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Graduation slated

A Retirement-Graduation for older people going into small business as an alternative to retirement, will be held tomorrow in the Fireside lounge.

"This is a pilot program in conjunction with the Agency On Aging (AOA), and the American Association of Com-

munity and Junior Colleges (AACJC)," instructor Dollie Mercedes said.

"Basically the concept is to have the students plan their business in advance, and plan where their investments will be," Mercedes said. "Its aim is to reduce small business failures."

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