



FROM THE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENTS'S MESSAGE

Now that the solar eclipse has come and gone with no lasting effects on civilization, as we know it, it's time to touch bases without membership to update you on what has happened within the MSOTFA and what will be coming up in the near future.

I am sorry to report that Katelyn Swanson will be stepping down as Secretary of the MSOTFA after this newsletter. She has moved to North Dakota and, as specified in our bylaws, she is ineligible to continue on as Secretary. It has been a delight to work with Katelyn for almost 3 years; she has handled all of her duties with a great deal of professionalism. We wish her and Tony the very best.

While we will miss Katelyn's service to the MSOTFA, I am pleased to announce that she will be replaced by Isaac Callender. As many of you know, Isaac and Louise have moved to Sand Coulee. It is not often that someone with Isaac's long-time involvement in the association who is also very talented and enthusiastic actually volunteers to serve as an officer in the association. I thank him for his commitment and I look forward to working with him.

Details on the Dillor Junior Fiddlers' new CDs are given later in this Newsletter. I can recommend all 4 of these CDs very highly. The kids played the best I have ever heard them, and Ben Winship did a great job recording and producing the end product. At \$15 each, or all 4 for \$50, you can't find a better bargain. And, it's not too early to start thinking about holiday shopping.

2017 STATE CONTEST

The 2017 Montana State Fiddle Contest is set for September 29 and 30 at the City Pavilion in Choteau. The contest will start at 5:30 p.m. Friday the 29th with competition in the Twin Fiddling, Anything Goes, and Dance Fiddle (2 rounds) divisions. Twin Fiddling and Anything Goes are jackpot competitions, with the winner in each winning the entire pot. The main contest will start at 9:00 a.m. Saturday morning and will run until approximately 9:30 p.m.

The order of play Saturday morning will include the 1st round of the Senior, Adult, Small Fry, Junior-Junior, Junior, and Novice divisions. The afternoon competition will start with the 1st round of the Championship division, followed by the 2nd round of the other divisions. The evening show will start with the 2nd round of the Championship division, the 3rd rounds for all divisions except for Small Fry and Novice (only 2 rounds in these divisions), and the 4th round of the Championship division will wrap the contest up.

As has been the case for the past two contests, we will not have advanced registration this year. Registration for all divisions will be available at the “street dance” Friday evening, and contestants can register for their division on Saturday up to 30 minutes before the first round of the division.

Orville Grasdock is preparing the trophies for the contest again this year, and I can assure you that that will be treasured by everyone who wins one. There is no way we can adequately thank Orville and Vera, as well as Teri Keith, who is helping assemble the trophies.

Judges this year are Tobi Magruder from Great Falls and Jesse Maw, a native of Kalispell who is now living in Salt Lake City. As most of you know, both are seasoned veterans of contesting with impressive records of accomplishment. Both have won two national titles at Weiser, they are respected as judges, and they have impressive records as teachers. We are really looking forward to having them chose the winners in Choteau, and the judges’ entertainment will be as good as you can get.

The Stage Stop Inn in Choteau is the host motel again for the contest. They are offering a good discount to competitors for the weekend; call them at (406) 466-5900 and ask them for the fiddlers’ rate. They also welcome jamming, either in their breakfast room or in the bar.

Contestants this year are going to be rewarded with a free T-shirt that features a logo developed by Brad Pinkerton. As many of you know, we lost Brad to cancer last December. The logo that Brad developed for us, and which will be on the T-shirts, is shown below:



We thank Isaac Callender for coming up with the idea of the T-shirts and for his efforts in getting funding for the project. Greg Boyd's House of Fine Music in Missoula is covering the cost of making the T-shirts; we thank them very much for such a generous donation to the contest.

Garnering support for the contest is progressing slowly but satisfactorily. We have been able to get support from some new donors, and we anticipate a few more new sponsors, so we should be able to comfortably cover our expenses again this year. Orville and Vera Graddock have been pounding the pavement in Choteau and surrounding communities; their efforts are very much appreciated.

ANNUAL MEETING

The 2017 general meeting of the MSOTFA is scheduled for Saturday, October 14 in the small meeting room of the Bozeman Public Library (626 E. Main Street) at 1 p.m. Two topics will be discussed in some detail. The first will be a review of the Contest, and we will discuss possible ways to increase participation in future contests. The second will be a discussion of ways in which districts have been successful (and unsuccessful) in increasing participation in their jams and other events and how we can better promote old-time fiddle music to our communities.

I am hoping that we can adjourn the meeting by 3:30 p.m. so that folks who drive from Missoula, Great Falls, Billings, etc. can make it home by dark if they want. As many of you know, I am scheduling state meetings in Bozeman because getting there involves the fewest total miles driven by members from throughout the state.

FIDDLE CAMP

The 2017 Montana Fiddle Camp was, by all measures, another rousing success. The roster of teachers, which can be seen on the Camp's web page (<http://www.montanafiddlers.org/camp.html>) includes the very best possible. The crew made sure that everyone was fed well (both in quantity and quality), and we very much appreciate their efforts.

DILLON JR. FIDDLERS' CDs

The Dillon Junior Fiddlers have released 4 new CD albums, recorded by Ben Winship on the weekend of March 4. The first two, "Color in the Pan" and "Golden Memories," contain 19 tracks each of assorted fiddle tunes. The 3rd album, "Celtic Gold," has 20 Irish and Scottish songs. The 4th album, "The Mother Lode," features 15 solo tracks by the more advanced players in the group.

19 young players are featured on the albums, aged 7 to 17, configured from large groups down to duets and solos.

Albums can be ordered on our website: Dillonjuniorfiddlers.com Also, the Dillon Junior Fiddlers Facebook page has more information. Or, you can call Sandy James at (406) 925-3483.