

B.C. OLD TIME FIDDLERS' ASSOCIATION SPRING NEWSLETTER

Prince George Branch #1



ADDRESS: Box 416, Prince George, BC V2L4S2
FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/pgfiddle](https://www.facebook.com/pgfiddle)
WEB PAGE: www.bcfiddlers.com/prince-george



Executive Phone Numbers

President: Beth Bressette 250 563-1025
Vice-Pres: Shawnee Newton 250 568-2215
Secretary: Chris Pittenger 250 962-1919
Treasurer: Michelle Sims 250 564-1101

Board Members: Kerry Williams, Breanne Crossley, Barry Nakahara, Corey Newton, Alex Arnott

NEWSLETTER *Beth Bressette, Editor*

SPRING, April 2020

To Fiddle Club Members: In this difficult time of pandemic outbreak and enforced isolation, we need to take heart and support one another. Some folks have a harder time than others being alone for extended times, so a phone call now and then would mean a lot. With the nice weather we can get out in our yards a bit more, and for those of us who are home owners there are no shortage of projects and tasks beckoning. And we can always play music - it's a good time to pick up some new tunes. On Judy's last Fiddlefest radio program I heard my Dad playing Bonnie Dundee, so had to grab his old fiddle and learn to play that tune! (CFIS 93.1FM, reruns on Tuesdays 6 – 8 pm) These are interesting times. When you think of it, most of us today haven't lived as adults through any major world crises, like wars or depressions or pandemics. We've been a privileged few generations! This uncharted path we're on will build character and stamina, so hang in there; we'll come through this and have something to tell our grandchildren. Listen to/watch the news only once per day to keep informed, then leave it off! It can be overwhelming. Stay home and heed the guidelines, but *don't worry*. To modify a bit of advice I saw somewhere concerning Action and Worry: *Following the recommended precautions is a straight line starting at the problem and aimed at its solution. Worry is a circle. It starts nowhere, aims at nothing, and returns empty-handed.* We'll get together again one day to jam and dance, but until then - look after yourselves, stay positive, connect with friends. Spend some time just sitting outside listening to the birds singing, and be thankful for this time of quiet relaxation, rejuvenation and reflection on life's priorities.

Beth

JAMMING WITH JJ

Saskatchewan renowned fiddler JJ Guy has been hosting jams on his Facebook page, playing some great tunes and inviting musicians from all over to join him. You can sign in (he will then know you're watching) and make comments or requests. You can watch past jams by clicking on the video. Although not a requirement, you can even make a \$5 donation on his web page if you enjoyed the jam. I don't know how long he will be doing this, but he did say he will be on again next Sunday, April 26. You can join in the live jam on his Facebook page, Sunday at 1:00.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NONE!

Unfortunately we are in the same situation as everyone else in this time of Covid19 shutdown. We have cancelled our weekly jams, dances, playouts in senior homes and the community until further notice. It's unlikely we will resume anytime soon - it's anyone's guess - but we will follow the recommended guidelines.

It was most disappointing to have to cancel our Jamboree, which was scheduled for last weekend, April 17-18. We had posters up, tickets printed and for sale at Books & Co, eight instructors booked for classes, and JJ Guy and Gordon Stobbe were pumped and ready to present a great concert on Friday night, as well as to organize other events such as Orchestra and our Family Dance. They had their air tickets booked, and although we did offer to reimburse them if they were out of pocket, they reported that the airlines gave them credits. They are quite willing and enthusiastic to return to Prince George whenever we are able to host our Jamboree.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

FAMILY ICE CREAM SOCIAL DANCE - Friday January 31

Although attendance was down for this event that we share with the Hart Community Association, those who did come out to the Eagles Hall had a great time. Thanks to the musicians – Shawnee, Breanne, Al, Terry, Ron, John S and Chris, and to the Sound guys – Ron and Terry – and the dance caller – Doug Borden, who all donated their time to make the event a success. And as usual, Kareen Graham did a great job of organizing.

WINTER OT FIDDLE DANCES – January 18 and February 15



Turnouts were low for our winter dances - maybe people just don't like venturing out in the cold and snow. We had about 35 for each dance and half of those were musicians or volunteers, but there was good music and those who came had a good time. Spot Dance prizes were won by Kerry & David Williams (Jan) and Barry & Kari Nakahara (Feb), Workers' draws were won by Elizabeth Eakin and Michelle Sims. Mel McConaghy and Corey Newton took home the door prizes. It looks like the kids are taking over the Members Door Prizes - Daniel was the lucky winner in Jan and Kaydence in Feb. The 50/50 draw was won by Tore Pettersen in Jan and Michelle Sims in Feb.

There was lots of great toe-tapping music provided by fiddlers Michelle, Elizabeth, Bev, Alex, Breanne, Beth, Arielle, Daniel, Kaydence, Ella, Breanne (Jan) and we were treated in Feb to the fiddling of Gabrielle Jacob, Shawnee, Faith, Barry, Kaydence, Michelle, Elizabeth, Alex, Beth.

Backup Musicians kept things in line; thanks to John S, Ron, Beth, Judy, Roland, Edna, Chris, Al C, Garth Laferdy, in January with the addition of Louise and Terry in Feb.

Thanks to Ron for setting up and managing sound, with help from John Saharchuk, Al Cardinal and Terry. Thanks to Janet and Peter Thwaites and Anna-Marie and Peter Lawrie, with help from Kari and Chloe, for preparing the delicious food. Thanks to David & Kerry Williams and the Nakahara Family for looking after the bar, and to Beth, Alex, Elizabeth, Breanne and Michelle for taking turns on the Door.



The March 21 dance had to be cancelled. We distributed a dance survey to those who came out to the fall and winter dances because we had wondered if we would get a better crowd on Fridays. We also noticed the crowd disperses about 11 pm so we wanted to know if people would prefer an earlier dance. And I wondered if having a bar is appreciated, since the bar is seldom a financially profitable venture. Thank you to those who offered their opinion on our survey. The response was 83% for staying with Saturday, 66% for moving the time to 7 – 11 pm, and 60% for keeping the bar. Thank you for your responses and suggestions.

Old Time Fiddling is traditionally about dancing so we want to keep our dances going, but I hope more members will make the effort to attend the dances next year. Invite family, friends and neighbours and let's see if we can fill the hall.

AGM and POT LUCK – Sunday, January 26

Annual General Meeting at ECRA was attended by 28 members. Barry Nakahara gave the President's Report and outlined the transitions the club has gone through this year, as a number of people had to step down from tasks they had been doing. He thanked them for their efforts, as well as those who currently volunteer their time, and he welcomed new people who have come to the Executive over the last couple of years, bringing new energy to the club. Barry announced he was stepping down as president because he is working from Vancouver now, but he agreed to let his name stand as director. He stressed that besides keeping old time fiddling traditions alive, the real value of the club is in the social connections and opportunities for participation that we create.

A new Executive was voted in; the names and positions are outlined on the Header of this Newsletter. The club currently has a total of 104 members – 82 adults and 22 children/teens. This number includes 16 'Life Members,' a special designation (with free membership) to those who have provided long and exceptional service to the club.

Arielle and Chloe are doing a great job of teaching our group lessons to beginner and intermediate fiddlers. They are paid to provide the lessons, and this is partially subsidized by the Thursday jam entry fees.

COMMUNITY PLAYOUTS

Kerry Williams is our playout coordinator for the regular events, and our musicians continue to entertain at the Chateau, Gateway, Kordyban Lodge, Riverbend, Laurier Manor, Jubilee and the Rainbow Day Centre (except during the pandemic).

A large group of our musicians put on a special concert for the Railway Museum Family Day on Feb 17, which was well-received, and afforded us (again) the special treat of riding the mini train through the fabulous lights display and looking around the railway cars.

We were booked to play for the Badminton Canadian Grand Masters on April 29, but this event has been cancelled until next year.

MEMBER NEWS



Sad news, as one of our members, **Bonnie Mueller (Gunton)**, passed away on February 4. A Celebration of her life was scheduled for March 21 but had to be postponed until the gathering restrictions are over. She's survived by her husband Don and children Debbie, Cindy, Ed, Alfred and Dan. Bonnie was happiest when surrounded by her family and her many friends, and listening to good music. She was a great supporter of local talent, co-organizing the Roots Music Festival at Blackburn and volunteering at the Cinema and Quesnel festivals.

Welcome to new member **Al O'Donnell** who most already know as one of the guys who helps out with tables and chairs (or anything else that's needed) on jam night, and welcome back to **Harry Collier and Richard Park** – great to see you guys again.

Chloe Nakahara took part in Cold Snap events again this year on January 24 with her band, *Big Fancy*. She does a great job with her fiddle backup and it was fun listening to them.

Look after yourselves and have a good summer.

Beth Bressette, Editor

