

April 15, 2019

Hello Fiddlers!

Plans are on for the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Minnesota State Old Time Fiddle Championships. The contest will take place on Saturday, August 3, 2019 at the Merritt Elementary School Auditorium, located just off Highway 169 in Mountain Iron, MN. As usual the National Old Time Fiddle Association is certifying our Championship division. This means that our Minnesota State Old Time Fiddling Champion will qualify to play at the National Old Time Fiddle Contest in Weiser, Idaho the following June.

We are so happy that Cristina Seaborn of St. Cloud, MN and John Wallace of Minnetonka, MN will be returning to judge. Sara Pajunen, our third judge, and Derek Birkeland, our back up guitarist, both hail from the Duluth area. Sara and Derek are no strangers to the MSOTFC, so we welcome them in these new roles. We are also thrilled to have a finished school addition that will move the practice area close to the back stage entrance to the auditorium. This will streamline performances so contestants can once again gain access to the stage from back stage, instead of from the audience area. The new backstage entrance is also handicapped accessible.

We are thankful to be funded in part by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, thanks to appropriations from the Minnesota State Legislature's general and arts and cultural heritage funds, and in part by Lake Country Power's Operation Round Up.

We ask that you pre-register by July 12th, but walk-ons are always welcome. Walk-ons must register between 10:30am and noon on the day of the contest. The meeting with the judges takes place at 12:30pm. There is no entry fee for the fiddle contest, but donations to help defray expenses are welcomed. Help us to spread the word to all your old time musician friends. There are categories for all stringed instruments.

The Holiday Inn Express and Suites on Highway 169 across from the school has an indoor pool and serves breakfast. They have 5 motor-home plug-ins available on a first-come-first-serve basis, free of charge. The AmericInn, located nearby on Highway 53, also has an indoor pool and serves breakfast. There is a Perkins and Walmart across the highway from the school. Many fast food options are nearby in Virginia.

We look forward to renewing old friendships, making new friends, and celebrating old time fiddling with you in Mountain Iron this August!

Musically yours,  
Sheila Wilcox and Holly Weir, contest co-chairs