



Fiddlin' Around

Michigan Senate honors Fiddlers Philharmonic creators



Surrounded by Fiddlers, Founder Bob Phillips (center) hefts the Stanley Cup, which happened to be visiting the Senate the same day as the Fiddlers. At Bob's left is Artistic Director Ben Culver. Founder Pam Phillips, at Bob's right, holds the plaque presented by Bev Hammerstrom.

Senator Bev Hammerstrom provides tribute

By Will Warner

"The Senate will stand at ease," intoned the president of the Michigan State Senate.

Moments earlier the Senate formally suspended its rules and temporarily allowed photography from the gallery. Senator Bev Hammerstrom set all of this motion in order to present the Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic to her colleagues and officially honor the group's founders, Bob and Pam Phillips.

While the Senate configured itself to receive them, the performers tuned in the Capitol's rotunda, their big sound reverberating, echoing from the marble tiles, wood-paneled walls, and portraits of former governors.

Finally granted the floor, Senator Hammerstrom invited the Fiddlers to deploy in a semicircle in front of the podium, facing out into the Senate chamber. Accompanying them were superintendent of schools Sam Sinicropi, assistant superintendent

Barbara Saxton, high school principal Joe Rossi, and Bob and Pam. Fiddler parents and Pam's mother watched from the overhead gallery, cameras at the ready.

New Artistic Director Ben Culver led the ensemble through *Big John McNeil* and *Mason's Ape Ron*. Senators and staff watched and listened and rewarded the effort with ringing applause.

Senator Hammerstrom returned to the podium to read from her

Meet the newest members of our fiddling group

Part two of a two-part series

By Barb Radloff

Here is the second installment of "Meet the New Fiddlers." The September/October "Fiddlin' Around" featured Marilyn, Patrick, Scott and Kristen. Meet the remainder of the new fiddlers for the 2002-2003 season:

-Brian-



Brian is a freshman violin player who joined the Fiddlers not only for the music but also because of the opportunity to travel and see the world.

Brian also had another interesting reason for joining the Fiddlers...he says he "likes the hat." Brian knew he wanted to be

a Fiddler ever since he was ten years old.

Brian is part of the freshmen football team and enjoys listening to different kinds of music, watching sports and most definitely enjoys sleeping. Brian has plans to be an FBI agent in the future.

Fiddlin' Around

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Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic.

We publish five times yearly, or as needed.

Jen Lahnala, Editor

Contributing photographs to this issue:

Karen Frank, Karen Kendall, Shelly Banet,
and Margo Douthat

www.salinefiddlers.com



-Emily-

Emily is a freshman violin player who has found the Fiddlers to be a new source to make good friends. She has been part of the Fiddle Club in Middle School and tried out for the Fiddlers with several of her friends.

Emily says a second cousin Pat who plays violin professionally has influenced her. When Emily was younger, she and Pat would play their violins together.

She is a member of the freshman basketball team and spends the little bit of free time she has hanging out with her friends or shopping. Emily hopes to make the JV and Varsity basketball teams. She knows college is in her future, but is undecided on the location.

-Jeremy-

Jeremy joined the Fiddlers as a guitar player in the rhythm section. This freshman enjoys many aspects of the Fiddlers but really likes the social interactions with the other Fiddlers and performing on stage.

Jeremy likes all kinds of music, including alternative

rock and rap. Jeremy was part of the Fiddle Club in Middle School and also served on Student Council.

Jeremy is unsure of his future educational plans.





-Michelle-



Michelle wanted to join the Fiddlers so that she could have a more challenging group to play music with. This freshman violin player has watched the Fiddlers for the last four years, as she is the sister of Fiddler alumna Laura.

Michelle also has played the piano since she was eight years old and hopes to keep playing in the future. She is a member of the high school cross country team and wants to pole vault in track. Michelle plans to study music at the University of Michigan.

...More new Fiddlers

-Ben-

Ben says he joined the Fiddlers because, "I think it's exciting how they get to travel around the world and play for important people." He hopes to visit Europe and have bigger singing parts with the Fiddlers.

Ben was influenced by the fiddle music stage show "Barrage" several years ago and wanted to become part of the Saline Fiddlers. Ben is part of the freshman football team and likes to play hockey and computer games and read.

Ben plans to attend the University of Michigan in the future.



Crowd-pleasing smiles



Senior violists Claire and Kristin always have a smile at the ready in a performance.

Winter Hometown Series

"Pulse" coming to Saline!

Be sure to join us for our Winter Hometown Concert featuring the explosive new musical sensation **Pulse**.

Pulse features Canada's top step dancers and fiddle players in a show you won't want to miss!! Look for more about **Pulse** in the next issue of **Fiddlin' Around**.

Tickets go on sale November 15th, 2002. Call 734-429-7210.

Friday, January 31, 2003, 7:30 PM
Saturday, February 1, 2003, 7:30 PM

Tribute / Fiddlers visit State Senate

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tribute: "Let it be known that it is with great respect that this legislative body is pleased to extend highest praise and admiration to Bob and Pam Phillips for their efforts as founders of the Fiddlers Philharmonic, a group of student musicians performing American style folk music. The Phillips's are bringing to a close their tenure as director and manager. The vision and devotion they have demonstrated throughout the years and the countless hours they have spent developing this group have benefited not only the students involved in the program but also those who have been fortunate enough to enjoy their performances. Together Bob and Pam have generously shared their time and talents to instill their gifts in others and inspire all to balance family, hard work, community and concern for others with grace and enthusiasm. And now as their time becomes a little more their own we wish them all the best for many peaceful and rewarding years."

Bob accepted a plaque from the Senator, and thanked her. He recalled the times the Fiddlers were honored to play at the White House and national capitol. "We're happy to represent Michigan all over the United States and the world."

All of this took place beneath a gold relief seal of the United States on the wall behind the podium. In the seal the eagle holds in its beak a flying scroll bearing the country's original motto: *E Pluribus Unum*. "One out of many," describes the Phillips's creation, too. Many performers, one Philharmonic. Many musical traditions, all America's music.

The camera catches senior violinist Evan during a recent performance for the Ann Arbor Women's City Club. Fiddlers particularly enjoyed playing for the club, whose members reacted with strong enthusiasm.



Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic

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Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic
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 Saline, MI 48176

Happy Birthday to:

Whitney	November 2
Scott	November 3
Phil	November 12
Claire	November 29
Sally	December 14
Brian	December 23

He puts the balance in the sound Meet Carl Newton, Technical Director

By Will Warner

As Technical Director for the Fiddlers, Carl Newton oversees training, operation and design of the sound equipment. In his day job, Carl is Compliance Engineering Manager at Xycom Automation in Saline. An electronics background and a bit of rock band experience lend themselves to his work with the Fiddlers. "I'm more of a hands-on



No slacker: Carl Newton can usually be found busy with the sound equipment. That's Patrick, left and Ben Culver, right.

type than a management type," he says, "so the sound guy function suits me."

For a year Joe Christensen, Carl and some other fathers were the "sound dads." Then Carl began to lead the effort with direction from then Assistant Director Ben Culver. "Ben taught me so much," Carl says. "He's a real sound guru." Few people in an audience understand how much the sound crew can color the music. "It's not just about making it loud enough without feedback." The work includes "adjusting tones for each section to fit the song as well as mixing just enough cello, just enough guitar, just enough vocal, and balancing all the violins."

"I'm thrilled to have him at the technical helm," says Ben. "Organizing and keeping track of our nearly 3000-piece inventory is no small task, and to do it with the kind of grace as to musically re-enforce the sound of our group is a skill that transcends pure engineering and becomes an art form."

Carl supervises a crew of student sound technicians, including Dan, Pat, and

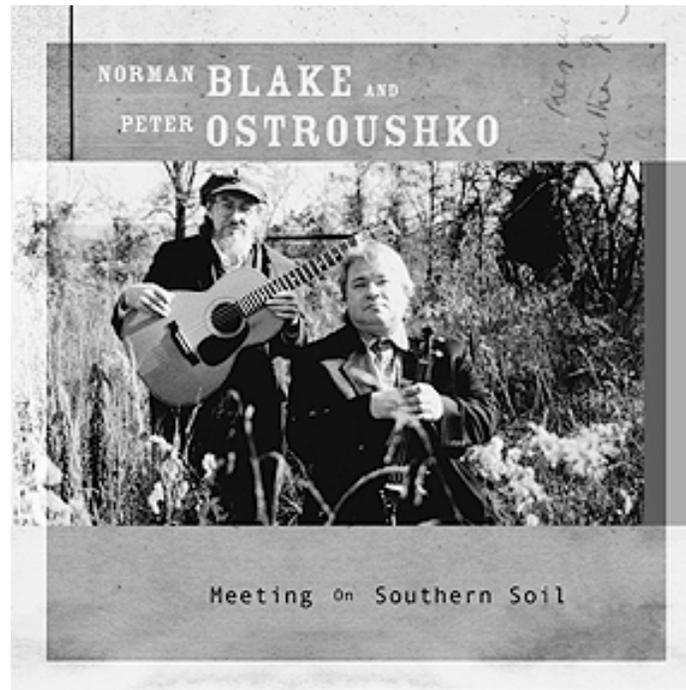
Dave. "They're all such great kids and I always enjoy working with them," he says. "Sometimes we get to do something special like work the sound booth at the Kennedy Center, or mix for nationally-known names at our hometown concerts."

Carl and Denise, his wife of 24 years, moved to Saline 18 years ago. Their son Mike is a guitarist in the Fiddlers. Carl himself is an avid acoustic finger-style picker. He bugged and bugged his dad for a guitar after seeing the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan show at age eight. "Day Tripper" was the first song he played on that original \$25 instrument. Carl performed in rock bands in Detroit for a few years and turned to acoustic when he was about 18. He now plays a Taylor 814CE.

Carl's commitment and contribution to the Fiddlers are impossible to overstate. You'll see him at nearly every gig, quietly performing this most crucial job for the group. "Ben told us that we've done our job well when nobody notices we exist," he says. This is why you may not have heard of Carl, until now.

Calendar of Public Events

- ♪ Friday and Saturday, November 1 and 2: **Ninth Annual Hometown Shows, 7:30 PM.** With the Saline Fiddle Clubs and guests **Norman Blake and Peter Ostroushko.** Saline High School auditorium, 7190 N. Maple Rd., Saline, \$12 for adults, \$5 for students grade 12 and under. Call Sherry for tickets, (734) 429-7210.
- ♪ Saturday, November 16: **Saline Flowerland's 25th Anniversary Celebration.** Performance at 1:00 PM.
- ♪ Tuesday, December 18: **Ann Arbor VA Hospital.** Open to residents and guests.
- ♪ Friday, January 31 and Saturday, February 1: **Winter Hometown Concerts. 7:30 PM.** With the Saline Fiddle Clubs and **Pulse.** Saline High School auditorium, \$12 for adults, \$5 for students grade 12 and under. Call Sherry for tickets, (734) 429-7210.



Don't miss out!

Tickets are going fast for the November Hometown Concert Shows, featuring Norman Blake and Peter Ostroushko (their album pictured above.) Tickets may not be available the night of the shows, so reserve yours NOW by calling 734-429-7210.

Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic

Ben Culver, Artistic Director
Mollie Nieves, Business Manager
Jesse Mason, Assistant Director
Carl Newton, Technical Director

Direct booking inquiries to Mollie: 1-866-257-5333

www.salinefiddlers.com