

Group founder preserves old-time fiddling tradition

By Deb Bockhahn

Put 50 fiddlers in a five-room house where they're forced to practice anywhere from the front porch to the edge of a bathtub and what have you got?

Why, the American Old-Time Fiddlers Association, of course.

According to DeLores DeRyke, association president, the first fiddlers organization in the U.S. was established in Lincoln in 1946. DeRyke was the founder of the association. She invited fiddlers from the Lincoln area into her home to "preserve the fiddling tradition."

DeRyke has become an expert in fiddling since she has founded the Lincoln, Nebraska and American Old-Time Fiddlers Associations, which has 5,000 in its international membership. Besides being president of all three associations, she publishes an international newsletter, gives private fiddle lessons and instructs fiddling at Southeast Community College.

In her efforts to promote fiddling, DeRyke said she has written more than 1,000 letters to libraries, governors and museums to collect any information available about fiddlers, but said her efforts only left her with a few news-

paper clips.

"Not even the Library of Congress had anything on it besides a clip about eight fiddlers in California," she said. "How can you preserve something without information?"

Finding nothing in the libraries, DeRyke said she has been collecting information from fiddlers since 1946. She has accumulated 33 file drawers full of music and tapes on fiddling.

"I've got more information than anyone else on the subject," she said.

DeRyke is a source of information for many institutions. She gets calls regularly from the Smithsonian Institute, National Geographic Magazine, the *New York Times* and the *Detroit Free Press* for information on fiddling contests across the country. The Smithsonian Institute sends a representative to Lincoln annually to find out about fiddling developments from DeRyke.

Although her group has formed the largest fiddling organization, DeRyke's efforts to promote fiddling hasn't stopped there, she also has helped other fiddling associations to form.

"I don't care if they join my group or not, I only want to preserve the tradition," she said.

The Nebraska Old-Time Fiddlers Association has 150 members and meets twice a year for "fiddling get-togethers." Members ages range from four to 102.

The only communication she has with the international members are occasional visits to the Lincoln office and through the American Fiddlers News that she publishes from her home office. The quarterly newsletter contains record and book reviews.

Fiddling interest has increased, according to DeRyke. She said she has started more than 100 beginner fiddlers this year. She also has written her own textbook for beginning fiddlers—that is the only one ever written except for a few advanced books.

Although DeRyke only teaches students the traditional Nebraska old-time fiddling, students may go in any direction from there after learning the basics, she said. Her students have gone into western, blue grass and traditional fiddling.

"The interest is here," she said, but the problem is there aren't enough fiddlers in the Lincoln area.

"We have people who want to learn and no instruments," she said.



Photo by Scott Svoboda

These musicians aren't just fiddling around. They're members of the Nebraska Old-Time Fiddlers Association, a group dedicated to preserving the old-time fiddling tradition. Back row: J. Crandall and association founder DeLores 'Fiddling De' DeRyke. Front row: George Chapman and Leon Hadley.

crossword puzzle

Edited by WILL WENG

ACROSS

- 1 Sour
- 6 Shed feathers
- 10 Baiting stats
- 14 Louisiana sight
- 15 Love, to Catullus
- 16 Sea bird
- 17 Scotland Yard items
- 18 Data, for short
- 19 Force
- 20 Like some jokes
- 23 Highway: Abbr.
- 24 Speed
- 25 Landscape debris
- 30 Mythical gods' blood
- 34 — Friday
- 35 Flower part
- 37 Cattle of old
- 38 Common int:jection
- 40 Shakespeare's Katharina
- 42 Obstacle
- 43 Cooked
- 44 Juniper
- 45 Numbered cube
- 47 Ice-cream and baking
- 49 Facial décor
- 51 Livingston, Seuss et al.
- 52 Southern power org.
- 54 Annoyance
- 61 Stylish
- 63 Metropolitan or disaster
- 64 Ship-mast gear
- 65 Profanity
- 66 Sincere
- 67 Kansas town
- 68 Angler's aim
- 69 This, in Madrid
- 70 Scorecard entries

- 11 Jail afloat
- 12 Travelers' rest
- 13 Work with type
- 21 French parents
- 22 After Jr.
- 25 Golly's relatives
- 26 "Gulliver's Travels" figure
- 27 African antelope
- 28 Numerical suffixes
- 29 Poet-Tensdale et al.

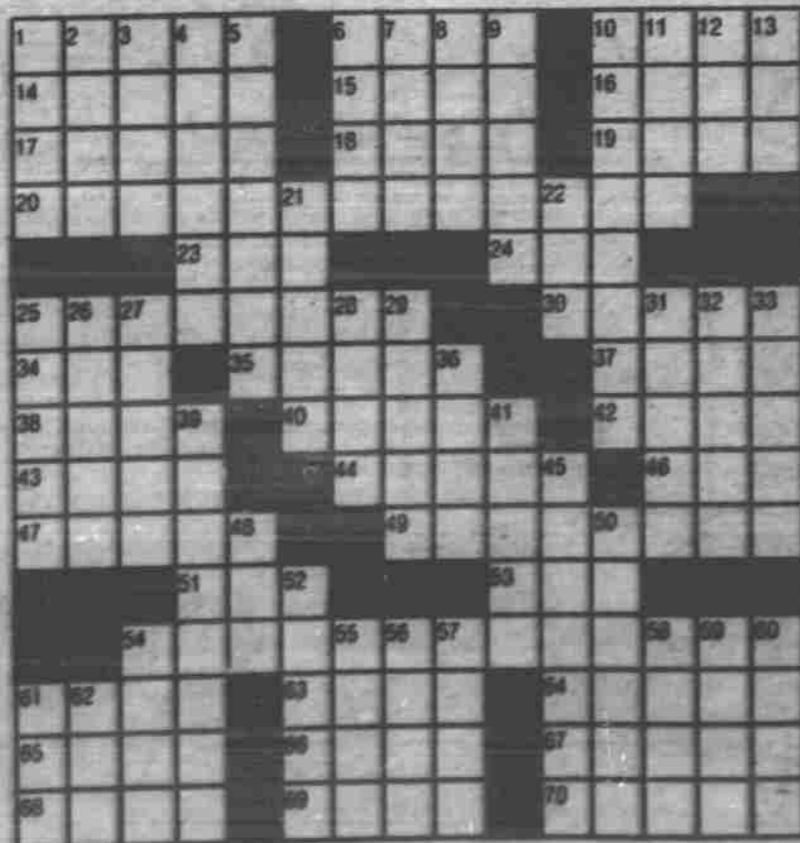
- 31 Native of India
- 32 Walking (elated)
- 33 Bavarian river
- 36 Son of Jacob
- 39 Worry
- 41 Shoe-buyer's concern
- 45 "— Sunday"
- 48 Title used by 31 Down
- 50 Kind of split or boat
- 52 Trap

- 54 English statesman
- 55 Provokes
- 56 Uncluttered
- 57 Narrative
- 58 Dutch cheese
- 59 "... nor iron bars a —"
- 60 Plateau of Yugoslavia
- 61 Part of a garden ear
- 62 "Bali —"

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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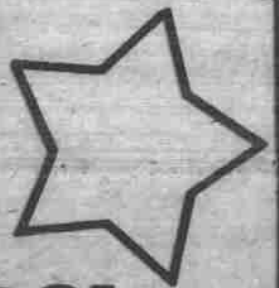
GRUB STAN ABAS
RARE STERE REDA
AYAL CASUSBELLI
BELLBOYS TOOLED
SATEEN ALA
PAPAL DRAB ADEM
AGORAS ARRS OVO
PESETAS DAPHNIS
ANT ALTO GLANCE
SAGE TEND IRATE
EMS PEERCE
ALLIED BLUEBELL
BELLTOWERS ERIE
ETUI RELIT LIMA
DOME STLO LAPP
    
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DOWN

- 1 Basics
- 2 City of Colombia
- 3 Regarded
- 4 Doatmen
- 5 Inge play
- 6 Kind of man or order
- 7 Prefix with present or bus
- 8 Hit a high fly
- 9 Marital pledge
- 10 Relatives of hillbillies

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