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**FIDDLERS
RESTRUNG**

Fiddle Beat

Saline Area Schools
Saline Community Education

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HOLIDAY HOMETOWN CONCERT TO SUPPORT TOYS FOR TOTS PROGRAM



Less than five minutes after the curtain came down on Fiddlers ReStrung's Holiday Hometown concert last year, it was unanimously agreed by everyone involved that an annual event had been born. Fiddlers ReStrung dedicated the concert as a kick-off to the Saline Fire Department's Toys for Tots campaign drive. Thanks to generous concertgoers, the firefighters collected over 150 toys and \$300 in cash donations.

This year's Holiday Hometown Concert is scheduled for Sunday, December 7, 2008 at 2:00 pm in the Ellen Ewing Performing Arts Center of Saline High School, 1300 Campus Parkway, Saline. Tickets are \$10. Reserved tickets are limited. To purchase an advance ticket, call (734) 944-2283. Tickets can also be purchased in-person at Saline Community Education Office, 200 N. Ann Arbor St., Saline.

The concert will be a collage of local community talent. Opening performances include Saline Area School's 6th Grade Fiddle Club, directed by Catherine Noble as well as the 7th and 8th Grade Fiddle Club, led by Fiddlers ReStrung Artistic Director Josh Herter. Also performing on stage will be select members of the Saline High School Choir and Saline High School Band, all of whom have

graciously offered to donate their time and talent to this event.

The Saline Fire Dept. has hosted a toy collection to benefit children identified through Saline Social Services for many years. It was seven years ago that Saline firefighter and U.S. Marine Corps Reservist Kurt Schneider initiated the fire department's alliance with the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves' Toys for Tots program. Though Gunny Sgt. Schneider is currently on active duty in Iraq, he made provisions with fellow marines to be at the concert in his stead. Fire Chief Craig Hoeft explains that it has always been their goal to provide for local children first and then the extended community. Fiddlers ReStrung joined in the effort, performing at the fire station for the past few years to mark the first official day of toy collection.

The Toys for Tots initiative began in 1947 when the wife of Major Bill Hendricks, USMCR, handcrafted a Raggedy Ann doll and asked her husband to deliver the doll to an organization that would give it to a needy child at Christmas. Finding that no such agency existed, Major Hendricks took it upon himself, along with a group of Marine Reservists, to form one. In the first year alone,

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**Sunday, December 7th ~ 2:00 pm ~ Saline High School
Tickets \$10. Reserve yours by calling (734) 944-2283
Please bring a new, unwrapped toy for donation.**

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they collected and distributed over 5,000 toys to needy children. The following year, Toys for Tots became a nationwide campaign. A Marine Reservist on weekends, Major Hendricks was in civilian life the Director of Public Relations for Warner Brothers Studio. As such, he was able to convince a vast array of celebrities to support the program. Walt Disney designed the Toys for Tots logo in 1948, which is still used today. The primary goal

has remained the same since its inception: deliver a shiny, new toy at Christmas to America's needy children as a message of hope.

Everyone attending the concert is encouraged to bring a new, unwrapped toy. Marines from Selfridge Air Force Base will be on hand to accept your donation. Donations can also be dropped off at the fire station any day after the concert date up until December 19th.

A SUMMER CELEBRATION

Everyone loves a party – Fiddlers ReStrung is no exception. To celebrate the release of their brand new CD “Roads Well Traveled”, the group held a CD Release party in August on the lawn of the Middle School. The afternoon's weather was typical for a Michigan summer – hot and humid. The performers and guests kept cool however, thanks to free ice-cold water and other frozen treats provided by Buschs.

The free, live performance featured guest performer Jeremy Kittel. An accomplished Celtic fiddler and Jazz violinist, Jeremy is also a local celebrity, having attended Saline schools. He is currently touring professionally with the Grammy-winning group, *Turtle Island Quartet*. Most recently, he won the “2007 Detroit Music Award for Outstanding Folk Artist”. Earning a reputation as one of the nation's most creative young musicians, he is equally adept at a wide range of styles including Scottish, Irish, jazz, contemporary classical and bluegrass. Accompanied by friend and professional guitarist Jesse Mason of the group Millish, Jeremy adeptly displayed his talent for playing various genres of music.

In keeping with the theme of the day, original compositions, Jeremy played a medley of Irish jigs he wrote entitled “Stairwell Time/The Slipping Jig/ Sky Paint”. Explaining its origin, he remarked lightheartedly, “I love to practice and compose in stairwells. The acoustics are great and the reverberations can make a solo violin sound like 20.” The tempo was slowed down next with a slow melancholy air; a Scottish tune called “Dargai”.

It was noted that this particular song is occasionally played on the Highland bagpipes. Many audience members smiled as they recognized the next selection, Jeremy's arrangement of the fiddler classic “Blackberry Blossom” followed by the definitive song of the Big Band and swing era, “Sing Sing Sing”. Concluding his performance with a medley of reels, Jeremy invited members of Fiddlers ReStrung to come up for a joint performance. Earlier that afternoon, he had conducted a workshop



Guest Performer Jeremy Kittel at FRS's CD Release Party



with the group in which he talked about the composing process. With each member contributing, the group wrote a new tune with the playful working title, “Pickles from a Hat”. Fiddlers ReStrung rounded out the afternoon's music party by playing several selections from their new CD, including “Deadwood”, “Calypso Jam” and “Fantasy Reel/Old Grimes”. Despite the heat, the young musicians displayed plenty of energy and enthusiasm. There is much for them to be proud of with the production of “Roads Well Traveled” and it shows.

A TALE OF TWO DIRECTORS

It was a bittersweet summer for members of Fiddlers ReStrung and their families. Not only did we say farewell to our graduating seniors; beloved Artistic Director Cori Smith also made her departure from the group. Cori will graduate from Michigan State University with a degree in Music Education. She will spend the next several months student teaching on a full time basis. She has already received job offers and has many contacts in the music and education world. Anyone who knows her has no doubt that she will share her enthusiasm, passion and love of music with young students for many years to come.

Cori's devotion to Fiddlers ReStrung has left a mark of legacy proportions. Countless hours were spent on her vision for the group's direction and philosophy based on a simple love of music. In her eyes, every person is a musical being and has something to offer. She's the kind of person who can help you find it within yourself.

That vision and philosophy was shared with Assistant Director Josh Herter, who, we are proud to announce, has taken on the position of Artistic Director. Saline Area Schools Cultural Arts Specialist Rebecca Groeb-Driskill notes, "Community Education is extremely fortunate to have Josh leading our ReStrung musicians. His knowledge of the group, both as a former member and as an Assistant Director lends a unique perspective. With his organization, creativity and continued desire to challenge our students with new styles of music and opportunities for arranging tunes themselves, I am confident he will provide exciting new opportunities for our students."

The musicians themselves are also extremely pleased with their new director. "Josh is lots of fun, has a great sense of humor and is extremely laid back," says new member and keyboardist Marielle D. Junior guitarist Mickey S. agrees, "He's especially tolerant. He also manages to get a whole bunch of stuff done!" That focus and "desire to get things done in an orderly fashion" has also been noticed by new member and violinist Grace W., who appreciates his "devotion to making sure the group performs as well as possible". He also has a high level of energy that never falters, according to sophomore bassist Sean C., "Josh always brings a willingness to work even on the most tiring and low on coffee days." Being in tune (no pun intended) and accessible to his students is also important. Sophomore cellist Adriane R. remarks, "I feel like I can talk to him about anything, whether it's changes to the music or something else about the group. You can tell he really cares about the group." Senior percussionist Jake H. neatly sums up their new director thus, "I admire his passion. I have



Artistic Directors Josh Herter and Cori Smith

never known anyone else who puts as much heart, soul and passion into what he loves to do, not only for the music, but for the performance and the students."

The quest to find a different style of direction was not easy. The two directors spent several summers arranging music only to find that it didn't quite fit the ensemble or the students didn't like the new music. Then quite suddenly one day while the duo was jamming and working out an arrangement for "The Distance Between Two Points", something clicked. "Cori has always taught improvisation and encouraged the ensemble to get involved in jam sessions, but I believe that it was a change in her own musical life that sparked new innovation into ReStrung", explains Josh. From then on, it was a whole new strategy: just play it!

And with that, a plan was put into motion to get the students involved in arranging their own music. At first, the fiddlers were uncomfortable with improv. "I was afraid I'd play a wrong note," says former member and violinist Courtney T., "but once you get past that, it's really fun. Cori encouraged everyone to step outside their comfort zone." Another useful (and fun) skill the group learned was "grooving". Sophomore bassist Sean C. explains, "I've learned how to keep a given tempo,

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feel the actual groove and not just the quarter notes or beats in the song, and staying loose.”

At this year’s winter retreat, the fiddlers were given one assignment: to write and arrange their own tune to be performed in small groups on the last day. They were given rehearsal time and free time and that was it. “It was a massive success,” recalls Josh. “It was a great deal of fun and utterly genuine.” By summer tour, the musicians were so comfortable with improv, they would use that skill while unwinding with a jam session at the end of a long day of traveling. Since then it has grown to newer heights. The group’s latest CD, “Roads Well Traveled” was heavily influenced by student participation. A turning point also came about this summer. “We arranged a version of John Hartford’s song ‘Tall Buildings’ as a group while crammed into a hotel room over tour. It was a volunteer assignment to which the entire ensemble showed up to participate,” comments Josh. Some insight into the new philosophy is indicated by an anecdote as told by upperclassman Jake H. “The solo is the reward. This was my response to Cori’s question, ‘What is a good reward for someone who takes a solo?’”

ReStrung’s new Director is keen to continue this vision for the group. This direction is without a doubt some-

thing that sets Fiddlers ReStrung apart from other ensembles. “People perform better when they perform music they like – music they have a part in creating. The energy we portray on stage is a reflection of that. It enhances our sound, not to mention the student’s own maturity,” Josh notes. The idea to open the organization to more student leadership doesn’t end with music. A Student Advisory Board has been organized and continues to grow in scope and focus. It’s a chance for the students to voice their opinion, share ideas, and get involved in setting direction for *their* ensemble. “I really like that Josh is making sure that ReStrung is what the students want it to be,” says sophomore violinist Sabine B. “Everyone has a valuable opinion and decisions aren’t made just by adults.”

Seeing the progress that’s been made to date, Josh remarks, “I’ve been extremely pleased with the work ethic these students have shown. We’ve had to fill the void left by a large, talented senior class and a beloved Director – and we’ve met that challenge successfully. I couldn’t ask for a better group of individuals to work with.” Clearly, Fiddlers ReStrung has been left in very capable hands.

CAMP TALAHİ — FIDDLE STYLE

One tradition of summer that most everyone can identify with is summer camp. They take their shape in many forms, but all have the same goal – growing as a person, working together as a team, and having fun while doing the first two. FRS summer camp is no different, except that fiddle music is part of the mix. This year’s getaway was at Camp Talahi in Howell, Michigan. Having the entire camp exclusive to them, the fiddlers enjoyed beach volleyball, canoeing, swimming, bonfires, s’mores and the inevitable “boys vs. girls” water balloon fight. Two campers, a freshman and a senior, share their first impressions and lasting memories.



Marielle D.— Keyboardist
Class of 2012

My experience at Fiddlers camp was nothing like I expected. I thought for sure that I would be all by myself, off in my own little world, without a clue of what was going on, just like I had been at previous rehearsals. But I got into the car on the way to the camp and instantly had multiple friends. I was shocked at how easy it was to communicate with all these older kids who had intimidated me before. I was still on edge when we arrived at camp, but with the help of the late-night yoga and early-

morning meditations, I was soon at ease. Everyone was incredibly friendly and helpful when needed, the food was completely melt-in-your-mouth, and the inside jokes we shared will last for years to come.



Jake H. — Percussionist
Class of 2009

Summer camp this year was a lot of fun! Let me start off by thanking Josh for a great time, the new music was great, and the water balloons were kind of fun too. Camp is a time not only for new music and intense rehearsals but it’s a time to get to know your fellow peers and musicians. Just like any other sports team, club, job, etcetera, you need to know how to work together and get along. The first time I went to camp I thought it would be lots of new music and intense rehearsals, but really camp was designed more to have fun learn and grow as a group. This year’s camp wasn’t any different. It was lots of fun and it’s always fun to see new people join and become part of the group. I think musically we learned lots of new styles of music and got a feel for what Josh wants us to learn in the future. Wow, it’s hard to believe that was the senior’s last summer camp! Fun times fly, but we will always have them to look back on as some of the best times of our lives.

PACK YOUR BAGS—IT'S TOUR TIME!

Ask any fiddler about the highlight of their year with Fiddlers ReStrung and the answer without hesitation will be *summer tour*! This year's summer tour destination was Minnesota and Wisconsin. The first stop on a successive eight-day performance schedule was at the IDS Crystal Center, a magnificent shopping mall and business center in Minneapolis. Many shoppers stopped and sat down to watch the show being performed in the heart of the mall. The sales table was quite busy and many signed up to receive a copy of the new CD upon its release. The musician's final tune was greeted by this tour's first standing ovation. Everyone had time to relax, swim and check e-mails before heading out to a dinner theater. "The Wonder Bread Years", a one-man show, focused quite amusingly on the similarities, rather than the differences of the generations. The Mall of America was a must-see destination for several fiddlers. The lower level features a magnificent aquarium, which amazed all with a walk-through glass tunnel filled with sharks, stingrays and swordfish.



*IDS Crystal Center,
Minneapolis, MN*

Members had an opportunity to conduct a workshop for the young musicians of Eden Prairie String Academy of Eden Prairie, Minnesota. The group of 40 students, ranging in age from 9-14, rehearsed and learned new fiddle tunes by ear from ReStrung members. Later that evening, the community was invited to see the musicians perform at a free concert held at a local church. The fiddlers had their new friends join them on stage for "Old Grimes" which they worked on together that afternoon. Sophomore violinist Sabine B. voiced her sentiments about the new friendships while announcing a song.



As representatives of Saline Area Schools, members of Fiddlers ReStrung are always eager to educate.

"The only thing nicer than the weather on the trip so far is the people we have met."

In Hayward, Wisconsin, the fiddlers met with the musicians of Northwoods Strings, a non-profit organization designed to bring string instrument instruction to local students. At an informal meet and greet, the members of ReStrung explained what they do, how they practice and what music means to them. Executive Director Dayle

Quigley explains, "I decided to bring Fiddlers ReStrung to the area, because I think it's always helpful to see musicians who are just a little further along the road. It shows you what is possible if you want it." That evening, Fiddlers ReStrung performed at a combined

benefit concert for Northwoods Strings and the Park Theater, a year-round venue for performing arts. While in the area, the group enjoyed a lumberjack show and a guided tour of the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe Reservation.



*Members of Eden Prairie String Academy,
Eden Prairie, MN*

No trip to Wisconsin is complete without a trip to the Dells, where the fiddlers next performed at the Thunder Valley Inn, a Scandinavian Bed & Breakfast. A boat trip up the Wisconsin River provided not only breath-taking scenery, but also an opportunity to learn the history of the Dells. Following a performance on a hot, sunny day at Noah's Ark Water Park, the group happily indulged in a full afternoon of wild waterslide activities. Favorite

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rides included "Black Anaconda", "Time Warp", and "Point of No Return" (also referred to as "Point of No Common Sense"). The park's management asked the group to return sometime, saying that they were by far a



FRS's Tour Coordinators Joan and Jim Roth show their patriotic pride.

crowd favorite of all entertainers previously hired. Following a brief rest and recovery, the fiddlers headed to Baraboo, Wisconsin where they performed for a very large, appreciative crowd outside the court-

house as part of the "Concert on the Square" summer music series. On Independence Day, the musicians gave a free concert on the lawn of Faith Lutheran Church in Reedsburg, Wisconsin and enjoyed a fireworks display later that evening.

Barely back home and unpacked, Fiddlers ReStrung next embarked on a mini-tour of Northern Michigan,

performing at the 125th annual Summer Fest in Rudyard, Michigan. The festival included a parade, softball tournaments, triathlon, and, of course, live music. The group also accepted an invitation by event planners at the historic Cheboygan Opera House. The fiddlers had performed there the previous summer and area residents were keen to have them return.

Just in case you're wondering what happens during those long bus rides: There's plenty of excited chatter at the beginning followed by reading, listening to music, card games, backgammon, watching movies, and new this year, inventing stage names for everyone. As they make the journey home, there's lots of sleeping! The adventures, memories and friendships made while on tour no doubt will last a lifetime.



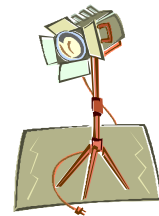
*"Fiddlers In A Fish"
Quite simply, it defies explanation...*

FOX 2 NEWS "ZIP TRIP" TO SALINE

Fox 2 News (WJBK-TV Detroit) crew was in downtown Saline very early one morning in July to film a segment for the local morning news called "Zip Trip". The segment highlights local community events and areas of interest around Michigan. The focus this time was Saline's Celtic Festival. Reporter Chris Edwards even donned a kilt for the occasion. Fiddlers ReStrung musicians were on hand to help promote the festival at which they would be performing the following day.



Spotlight on our newest fiddlers!



Fiddlers ReStrung is proud to introduce the newest members of its group! They all worked very hard to pass auditions. Once a member of the group, the work really begins. They're required to memorize lots of new music in order to begin performing. We were very delighted to have them on stage with us this past summer!



Allison W.
Violin
Class of 2011

"I saw everyone having a good time on stage," explains Allison as to how she became interested in ReStrung. "I like going to different places and I really enjoy playing all of the music." *Westphalia Waltz* quickly became her favorite tune simply because of the similarity to her surname. Allison enjoyed the Relay for Life gig in Milan because "it was my first gig and there were people there who knew me." She is also a Girl Scout and likes to do Therapeutic Riding. Her interests include doing web design, making animated music videos, swimming and listening to music. In her spare time, Allison like to write stories, read, draw and surf the Internet.



Grace W.
Violin
Class of 2010

Grace became interested in FRS when she attended last year's Hometown Concert in December to watch her younger brother play on stage with the Middle School fiddle club. "It looked like fun," she says. Grace enjoys learning to play fiddle music and may continue to study music in college noting "This experience has already taught me quite a bit." Her love of music is so great that she is also a member of the Jazz Band, Marching Band and Pep Band. She has been playing the violin for ten years and also plays trombone. "I enjoy playing music with my younger brother and sister and arranging music so that we can all play together." The whole family joins in, as she explains, "I like jamming on brass with my uncle, cousin and brother." Her favorite fiddle tune is *Star of the County Down* because "it sounds melancholy to me and for some reason, I like that." In her spare time she enjoys spending time with her family, reading and doing crafts.



Marielle D.
Keyboard
Class of 2012

Marielle has been playing the keyboard and piano for six years. Her interest in ReStrung was as a result of watching her older brother Matt, an alumni of the group, perform. The experience for her has been very enjoyable, particularly summer camp. You can read all about it in a featured article in this newsletter. "Everyone's like a family and we have a lot of fun on top of the hard work and entertaining everyone." Her favorite fiddle tune is *(Old) Ross' Reel* because "it's catchy". Marielle's musical talent does not stop at the piano—she plays clarinet.. She is also a member of the Marching Band! In her spare time, she enjoys running, going to the movies, football games and just hanging out with friends.

What I did at fiddle camp...



Josh Herter, Artistic Director

For booking information contact:
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Or e-mail us at bookings@fiddlersrestrung.com

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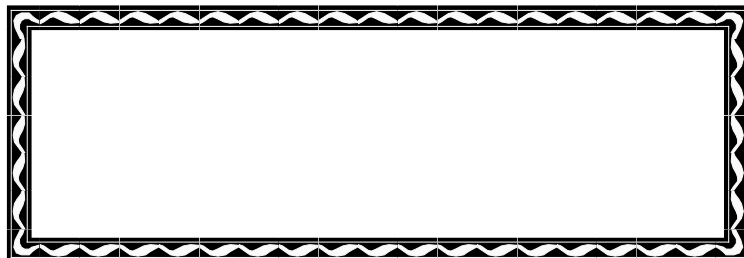
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