



# Fiddler's Rag

Vol. 44, Number 3  
Celebrating 43 years

Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association  
[www.scvfa.org](http://www.scvfa.org) or [www.fiddlers.org](http://www.fiddlers.org)

March 2016  
Next Jam: Mar. 6



## President's Note

I am proud and honored to be appointed president of SCVFA as this fine organization enters its 44th year. It is my intent to work hard for the betterment of SCVFA, while encouraging all members to give a little time and energy.

It does take a village!

At the February jam, we honored Richard Brooks and Janet Johnston. Richard has made the position of board president look easy for the past 8 years. He has dedicated much time and energy to keeping with the mission statement of SCVFA, ensuring that our organization continues to promote "traditional music which constitutes the cultural heritage of our forefathers and which is exemplified in the playing of the fiddle, guitar, banjo, mandolin, string bass, and other associated musical instruments and devices in the tunes handed down as old-time fiddling music, mountain music, gospel music, and variations that incorporate other traditional fiddling styles." Many thanks to Richard. Janet has been the treasurer and routinely shared responsibility for the admission table. We will miss the presence of both of you at our monthly jams. Please do come visit often.

Congratulations to our new trustees, Bert Raphael and Wes Mitchell. They will certainly bring new ideas and energy to the board. Dinah Showman is now our new treasurer and Anne Raphael is our recording secretary. Thank you in advance for the contribution of your time and energy.

This will leave one trustee opening. Could that one be you?

### A couple of reminders for the March Jam

The Slow Jam now starts at 1:30.

Thank you Topher Heath for leading the Slow Jam.

Happy-New-Year discount - \$5.00 admission continues for the month of March.

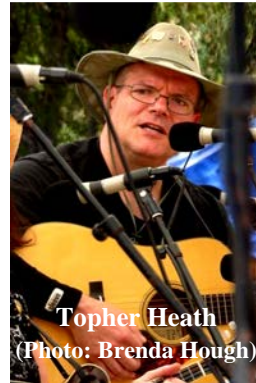
Remember, all SCVFA members are welcome at our board meetings. Contact any board member for meeting date, time and location. My goal is to meet every one of you. Please come introduce yourself. For that you will get a kiss.



--- Susan Goodis

## I Don't Remember a Time When I Didn't Love Music by Topher Heath

In elementary school we had a music program that amounted to a music teacher coming to our school, teaching us songs, and preparing a Christmas and a spring concert. It is always amusing to me as I recollect that the music teacher would have to ask me to quiet down and ask the other boys to sing louder. We also had a band teacher for the older students and when I was old enough, I started to play trumpet, a choice that was largely influenced by the fact that we had one.



Topher Heath  
(Photo: Brenda Hough)

I continued to participate in choir and band throughout junior and senior high school as well as perform in several musicals including playing Charles MacPherson Dalrymple in "Brigadoon", Colonel Pickering in "My Fair Lady", and Conrad Birdie in "Bye, Bye Birdie".

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The Fiddler's Rag is published monthly by the Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association and is provided to members of the Association. The Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association (SCVFA), founded in 1973 in San Jose, California, is a nonprofit, volunteer-operated organization dedicated to the preservation, teaching, and enjoyment of traditional music. The first membership in a household includes the Fiddler's Rag; additional members sharing the newsletter are steeply discounted. To join, sign up at the jam or see [www.fiddlers.org/join](http://www.fiddlers.org/join).

#### Officers and Chairs

|                          |               |                            |                  |
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| President-Trustee .....  | Susan Goodis  | Newsletter Publisher ..    | Charlotte Prater |
| Vice President .....     | Élan Alford   | Performances Contact ..    | Dave Williams    |
| Recording Secretary .... | Anne Raphael  | Publicity .....            | OPEN             |
| Treasurer .....          | Dinah Showman | Webmaster .....            | Pete Showman     |
| Membership Secretary     | Pete Showman  | Youth Programs Chair ..... | OPEN             |
| News Editor .....        | Patrice Tanti | Youth Fiddle Contest ..    | Pete Showman     |

#### Trustees

|                      |                      |                       |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Seat 1: Pete Showman | Seat 3: Bert Raphael | Seat 5: Dave Williams |
| Seat 2: Élan Alford  | Seat 4: Wes Mitchell | Seat 6: Susan Goodis  |

#### To Contact the SCVFA:

Mail: P.O. Box 2666, Cupertino, CA 95015-2666

Email to Richard Brooks: [president /at/ fiddlers.org](mailto:president/at/fiddlers.org)

**Newsletter Submissions & Comments:** [newsletter@fiddlers.org](mailto:newsletter@fiddlers.org)

**Address changes:** [membership /at/ fiddlers.org](mailto:membership/at/fiddlers.org)

**Website:** [www.scvfa.org](http://www.scvfa.org) or [www.fiddlers.org](http://www.fiddlers.org)

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(Continued from page 1)

I was also influenced greatly by my father, who is now retired from being a professional church musician as an organist and choir director, a high school choral music teacher, and a private piano and voice instructor. He taught in a school district close to home, not the one where I was enrolled, but he was always supportive of my musical endeavors and reinforced my love of music at home.

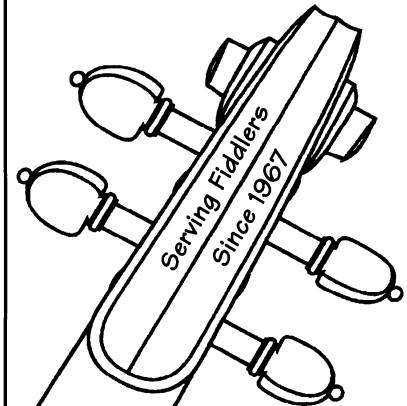
When I went to college I started as a voice major and piano minor but later decided to learn computer programming and while working in that field, I got my degree with a major in business administration with an emphasis on information technology management. During this time, music took a back seat in my life. This changed in about 2001 when I learned that the VP of engineering where I worked played the banjo and after speaking with him, he introduced me to his teacher, Jack Tuttle. I took banjo lessons for a few years and then switched to guitar.

As I have endeavored to learn Old Time and Bluegrass music, I have found that the community aspect of this music is very compelling to me but I wasn't skilled enough to go to a jam and play any song and any speed. This was very discouraging to me and often affected my participation. In 2009 I got the idea from the Abbott family to use their Toneway method to hold slow jams where I could not only assist others to learn and participate in this music but also develop my own playing. I did this for a time but I was struggling with a venue due to circumstances in my life. In 2014, somehow I got connected with Richard Brooks and the Slow Jam at the Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association monthly jam was born. It is an honor and a privilege to participate with you.

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# SCVFA Happenings

## SCVFA Slow Jam

Thank you all for participating in the slow jam. The slow jam is for beginners who want to participate in a slow-paced jam (60-90 BPM). To participate, you should be able to tune your instrument, play chords at a steady pace, and (optionally) work up melodies / leads. We keep things at an easy pace and we often play breaks together (old time style) even on non-fiddle tunes. This makes it possible for you to join the jam where ever you are at in your development as a musician. So, come join us!

The song list is:

- D Angeline The Baker
- D Arkansas Traveler
- G Girl I Left Behind Me
- G Hot Corn, Cold Corn
- D Jaybird
- D Liberty
- G Long Journey Home
- D Mississippi Sawyer
- G Mountain Dew
- D Over The Waterfall
- A Red-Haired Boy
- D Soldier's Joy
- C Wildwood Flower
- A Will The Circle Be Unbroken
- G Worried Man Blues

Check here first for songs: [www.scvfa.org/tunes/](http://www.scvfa.org/tunes/)

If you have trouble finding a song, feel free to contact me for ideas.

Note: To add or remove yourself from the email list for the Slow Jam, send a request to [topher.heath /at/ xxxxxxx](mailto:topher.heath/at/xxxxxxx). This is not an email reflector and is not automated.

## Upcoming events

March 1<sup>st</sup>: **Erynn Marshall & Carl Jones**

House Concert – 8:00 pm

Workshops – 5:00 pm

Guitar with Carl Jones

Fiddle with Erynn Marshall

Reservations and details: [sgoodis@gmail](mailto:sgoodis@gmail)

## SCVFA Meeting Notes

**At the SCVFA Annual Membership Meeting on February 7, 2016:**

- Wes Mitchell and Bert Raphael were elected to three year terms as trustees, beginning immediately.
- Bylaws changes as proposed in the January newsletter were adopted. These changes related to candidates running by petition for SCVFA trustee, signers and co-signers on the SCVFA bank account, and membership period and grace period.
- President Richard Brooks described the state of the organization, thanked volunteers, and encouraged others to volunteer to help the organization. SCVFA is in good shape financially and in the number of its members.
- Richard Brooks and Janet Johnston were thanked for their many years of service and were presented with a plaque and an SCVFA mug. Cake was served to all.

**At a special trustee meeting on February 7, 2016** during the jam, trustees

- Appointed Susan Goodis as SCVFA president-trustee, effective immediately.
- Appointed the following officers:
  - Vice President ..... Élan Alford
  - Secretary ..... Anne Raphael
  - Treasurer ..... Dinah Showman
- Reappointed the following officers and chairs:
  - Membership Secretary ..... Pete Showman
  - Newsletter Editor-Publisher ..... Pat Tanti
  - Newsletter Publisher ..... Charlotte Prater
  - Performances Contact ..... Dave Williams
  - Webmaster ..... Pete Showman
  - Historian ..... Dinah Showman
- Authorized changing signers on the SCVFA bank account to certain currently serving trustees and the treasurer.
- Noted that March 20, 2016 is the proposed date for the next regular trustee meeting.

Show your pride in SCVFA. Get your wearable art in one of two designs:



Email: [sgoodis@gmail](mailto:sgoodis@gmail) for information.



## Trip to the Portland Old Time Music Gathering (POTMG)

By Élan Alford, Dave Barton, Patti Bossert, Larry Joba, Tom Clausen, Patrice Tanti, Susan Goodis

**Élan Alford:** I have been planning to go to the POTMG for several years, and 2016 was my first trip up. Portland Old Time Music Gathering occurs annually on the weekend before MLK day in January and is run entirely by volunteers.

I took a late flight and arrived on Thursday night. I had time to do a little touring around Portland on Friday before the evening concert events. On Saturday the day is filled with workshops; if those aren't of interest, there is plenty of jamming going on too.

Folks from SCVFA gathered for dinner nearby and made it back to the venue in time to enjoy the evening concert sets or dancing. Then there are the after-parties! There are official hosts for the Gathering, which makes it really easy for out-of-towners to navigate to a fun, late-night jam session.

On Sunday, there is a cabaret show. I volunteered the Fandango Folks (Larry Joba, Susan Goodis, Patti

Bossert and myself) to play a 3-song set. We settled on a set in D: Sarah Armstrong, Old Piss, and Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss.

I am so glad that many of the local folks from the South Bay made it up. But it is nice to see new faces too; I met some great folks on the plane ride up. I will definitely attend the Portland Old-Time Gathering again in the future. It is a great weekend in a great city. A great note is that flights up are very reasonable; I think I spent \$100 to fly roundtrip.



Kate Chaitin, Patti Bossert, Dave Barton and Greg Canote (Photo: Susan Goodis)

**Dave Barton:** My last Portland Old-Time Music Gathering was in around 2006, when the venue was an old men's-club lodge on Burnside Street several blocks east of the Willamette River. Most of the jams took place in the large basement, whose walls subdivided spaces of various sizes that generally worked well. Acoustics were reasonably good. A large room on the main floor had the main stage, and became the dance floor after hours. But there were not good nearby places to stay.

The new venue, Tiffany Center, offers lots of little spaces on its many floors that can work for jamming, but in them all, the floors, walls, and ceilings have hard surfaces, so acoustics seriously suffer. Lodging offerings in downtown Portland include one hostel and many decent nearby hotels, one just a block away.

I found some good jams, mostly in main-floor hallways. When no one performed in the "big room", multiple jams started in that room. To hear the other jammers, though, you had to sit or stand very close. That's when I wished for the old place! All in all, I found it a worthwhile trip, and I'll probably go again.

I enjoyed a bonus, too, the private tour guide services of my eldest son, Ken. He took me to a nice restaurant for dinner Friday night, too!



Downtown Portland (Photo: Susan Goodis)

**Patti Bossert:** One take-home for me was the different variety of jam tunes played and the length of time played. Musicians seemed to take an almost meditative stance while jamming, even though fast! I was in awe of Jimmy Triplett on stage and ran to the CD vender only to learn that he has no CD's available because he makes his living as a PhD Botanist, not musician or folklorist.

I feel very privileged to have participated in this Gathering and to have spent time with friends, as well as to have been introduced to so many new (to me) musicians and tunes. There are just so many tunes and so much to learn. I will never catch up! This is good because it will keep me young!

**Larry Joba:** Our group from SCVFA included Patti Bossert, Patrice Tanti, Dave Barton, Tom Clausen, MaryAnn Clausen, Élan Alford, Liza Bodistow, Susan Goodis and me, Larry Joba. I spent an afternoon touring the city via the trolley with Susan and Patti.

I enjoyed every opportunity to jam and I think I outlasted everyone else when it comes to jamming

**Tom Clausen:** I loved every second of our time together there and only regret that I missed out on some of them. Portland has good coffee, good beer, good music, plenty of rain, friendly musicians... no wonder everyone goes there and no one stays here anymore. Hmmm?

**Patrice Tanti:** I happened to attend a family reunion that weekend in Portland but still found time to join a fiddle workshop with Grace Forest. It was fun to see many familiar SCVFA faces at the event and wish I had had time to share a beer or two with the gang.

**Susan Goodis:** When there is great music, there will certainly be amazing dancing. "Fire in the Hole!!!" That's how each nightly dance started. Top notch bands played rhythms to keep about 200 dancers, most under 30, gyrating for 3 hours every evening. I am shocked that I had the stamina to keep up with all that youthful energy, but I did for about 45 minutes each night, and it was most exhilarating.

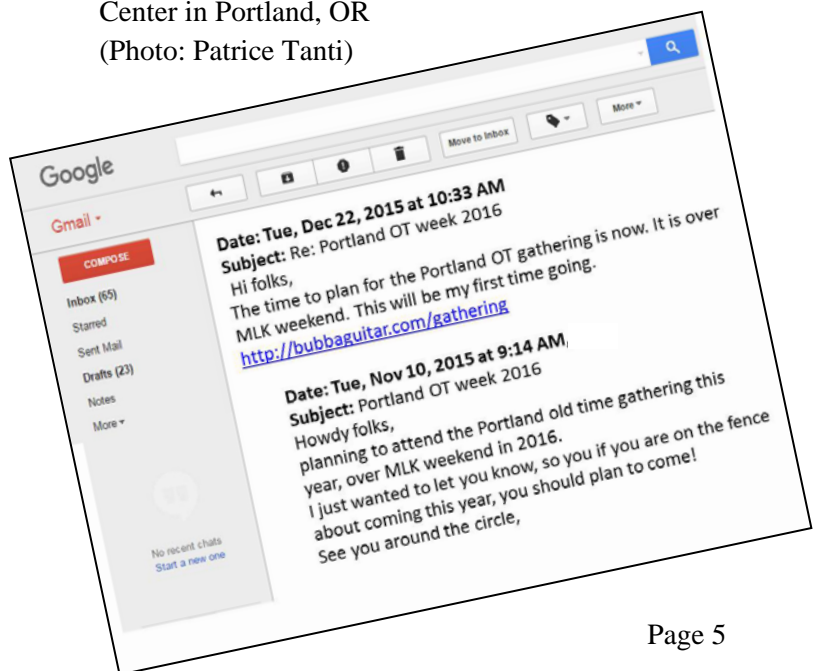
POTMG offered many workshops and concerts. "Weird Texas Tunes" led by Tricia Spencer & Howard Rains delivered a repertoire of too many good tunes to absorb in one session. Don't worry, because Tricia and Howard will be coming to teach a fiddle workshop in Mountain View in September and to treat us to more great music with a house concert.

This trip was my first time in Portland. I'm glad to have been there early enough to have time to tour the city. There is so much more to see that I look forward to my next visit to Portland.



Fiddle workshop in the Crystal Room at the Tiffany Center in Portland, OR

(Photo: Patrice Tanti)



# Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association

## Sunday March 6, 2016

### KidFiddle Workshop



**Instructor: Erik Hoffman**

**KidFiddle Workshop:** 2:00-3:00 pm

**Mini-Concert** starting at 3:30

*KidFiddle* workshops are intended for advanced-beginner to intermediate fiddlers, ages 17 and under.

Tuition is only \$5, and youth admission to the jam is free as always. You can sign up at the event, but we'd appreciate hearing from you in advance (at [kidfiddle /at/ fiddlers.org](mailto:kidfiddle@fiddlers.org)) if you know a young fiddler who would like to participate. After the *KidFiddle* workshop we'll ask the students to perform on stage with Erik. At 3:30, Erik will perform a mini-concert

for us. Come to hear what the students have learned, and stay to hear Erik play.

Erik has been a Musician and Dance Caller for over 30 years. Traveling all over the state, Erik has become well known from Arcata to San Diego, and from Carson City, Nevada, to the Bay Area. He has also toured the United States extensively, on both coasts, and in between. He has been staff at a number of festivals in California, New York, New Mexico, and Washington state. Erik has been in numerous bands: The OpporTunists, Erik Thor and Hands Four, 3 O'Clock Shadow, and currently plays in 'The Rosin Doctors'.

**March 6 at Hoover Middle School  
Naglee Ave at Park Ave San Jose**

**Jam 1-5pm Erik's Mini-concert 3:30**

New Year Discount: Adult Admission \$5.00

Free Admission for Youths 17 and under

**KidFiddle Workshop 2:00 - 3:00**

for youths 17 and under \$5.00 Tuition

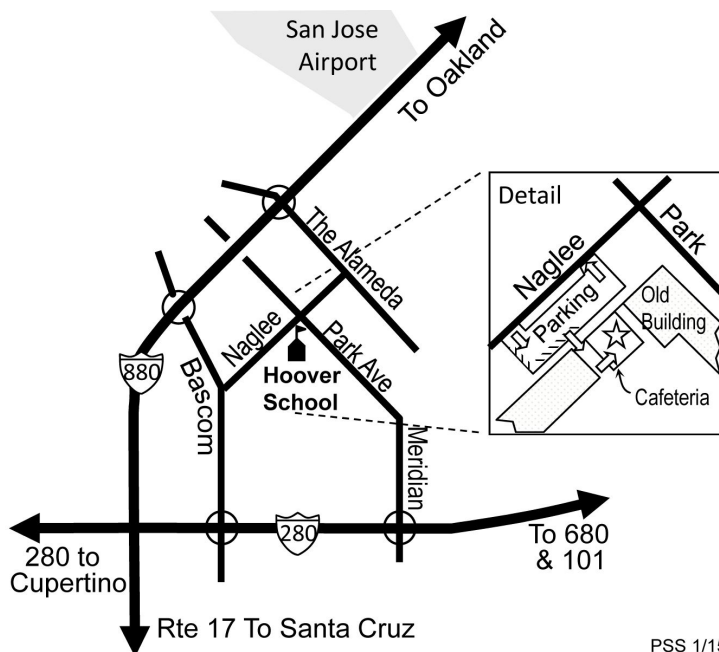
Sign up at [KidFiddle@Fiddlers.org](mailto:KidFiddle@Fiddlers.org)

Open Mic before and after the concert.

More details & general SCVFA information

[www.Fiddlers.org](http://www.Fiddlers.org)

or call Susan Goodis at 650-336-5561



Key: C Maj.  
♩ = 90

# Wildwood Flower

Traditional (sort of)\*  
Arr. Pete Showman (et al.)

\*\* These 'C' notes at the ends of lines are often stretched as shown, adding extra "turnaround" measures.

**Emmylou Harris and Iris Dement lyrics**  
([www.youtube.com/watch?v=7\\_x9B\\_\\_0rgE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_x9B__0rgE))

**"Mother" Maybelle Carter's lyrics**

1. I will twine and will mingle my raven black hair  
With the roses so red and the lilies so fair,  
And the myrtle so bright with an emerald hue  
The pale emanita and hyssop so blue.\*\*\*
2. Oh, he taught me to love him and called me his flower  
A blossom to cheer him through life's weary hour  
Now my heart is now wondering no misery can tell  
He left me no warning no words of farewell
3. I will dance I will sing and my life shall be gay  
I will charm every heart in the crowd I will sway  
Though my heart is now breaking he never shall know  
How his name makes me tremble my pale cheeks to glow
4. Oh, he taught me to love him and promised to love  
And cherish me over all others above  
Oh, I long to see him and regret the dark hour  
He's gone and neglected this frail wildwood flower

1. Oh, I'll twine with my mingles and waving black hair  
With the roses so red and the lilies so fair  
And the myrtles so bright with emerald dew  
The pale and the leader and eyes look like blue.
2. Oh, I'll dance, I will sing and my laugh shall be gay  
I will charm ev'ry heart, in his crown I will sway  
When I woke from my dreaming, idols were clay  
All portions of love then had all flown away.
3. Oh, he taught me to love him and promised to love  
And to cherish me over all others above  
How my heart now is wond'ring misery can tell  
He's left me no warning, no words of farewell.
4. Oh, he taught me to love him and called me his flow'r  
That was blooming to cheer him through life's dreary  
hour.  
Oh, I'm longing to see him through life's dark hour  
He's gone and neglected this pale wildwood flower.

\* *Wildwood Flower* was popularized by the Carter Family, particularly as sung by "Mother" Maybelle Carter in a 1928 recording. Maybelle said she had learned the song as a youngster, from her grandmother. It's believed that it was originally a song called *I'll Twine 'Mid the Ringlets*, copyrighted in 1860. The music, similar to the melody above, was by J.P. Webster. The lyricist was "Maud Irving," likely a pseudonym for the poet J. William Van Namee (see Eric M. Bram's article, *The Mystery of Maud Irving (the "Wildwood Flower")*, at [www.ergo-sum.net/music/MaudIrving.html](http://www.ergo-sum.net/music/MaudIrving.html), and the original sheet music, at [www.ergo-sum.net/music/Twine'MidTheRinglets.pdf](http://www.ergo-sum.net/music/Twine'MidTheRinglets.pdf).)

Maybelle Carter later said some of the words had "gotten mixed up" and that "they don't make much sense in a few places in the song." Many variations out there attempt to correct that, and there's much discussion on the Web about what the lyrics "should be" -- but no real answers. The online version of this transcription (at [www.fiddlers.org/tunes/](http://www.fiddlers.org/tunes/)) also has the original published lyrics to "Mid the Ringlets" for comparison, from Wikipedia and Peter Wernick's "Bluegrass Songbook".

\*\*\* In the original, "The pale aronatus with eyes of bright blue." But "aronatus" is not a known flower name. Some sing "pale amanita" or "pale emanita", and sometimes "and islip so blue," but neither "emanita" nor "islip" is a recognized flower. "Amanita" is an often-poisonous mushroom (with no blue 'eyes'). Hyssop has blue flowers, but is not native to the U.S.

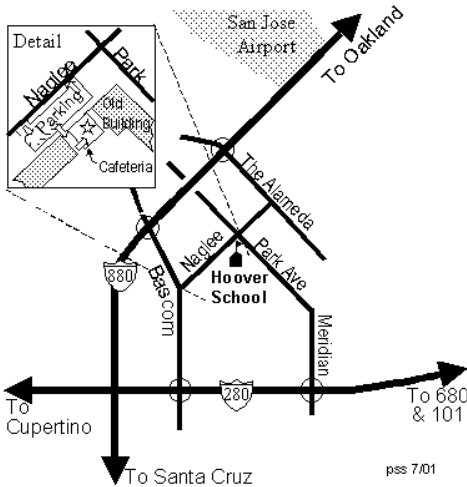
Arr. and typeset in ABC by Pete Showman, text revised 4/7/2016 (rev 4)

**Santa Clara Valley Fiddlers Association**  
**P.O. Box 2666**  
**Cupertino, CA 95015-2666**

**Next Jam, KidFiddle Workshop and  
 Concert: Sunday Mar. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1-5 pm  
 at Hoover Middle School**

SCVFA Jam on the first Sunday of each month.  
 Location: Hoover Middle School, 1635 Park Ave.,  
 San Jose. The school is at the corner of Naglee and  
 Park. Cafeteria parking is on the Naglee side.

**Damaged or Missing Issue? Call us,  
 or email to: [newsletter@scvfa.org](mailto:newsletter@scvfa.org)**



Old-Time Jam (Photo: Richard Brooks)



Above: Pete Showman presents a plaque to Richard Brooks honoring Janet Johnston and Richard Brooks for their many years of SCVFA service.



Center: time for a tasty cake to celebrate!

Right: detail of the crafty fiddle-shaped plaque.

(Photos: Patrice Tanti)

