

THE ARIZONA FIDDLER

Official Publication of the Arizona Old Time Fiddle Association Inc. Published bi-monthly

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Webpage: <http://www.arizonaoldtimefiddlers.org/> Facebook: Arizona Old Time Fiddlers Association

July/August 2025

Contact Noreen Johnston to pay your dues. fiddlerslady@aol.com

Upcoming Events

2025 Events

Rocky Mountain Regional Contest, July 12, 2025. Casper, Wyoming. Central Wyoming Fair

Peabody Hale Contest and Music Festival July 25-27, 2025. Crawford, Nebraska. City Park.

State Fiddle Contest. Payson, AZ September 4-6, 2025. Events Center. **DATE CHANGE!**

Picking in the Pines. Flagstaff, AZ. September 12-14, 2025

Salome FiddleFest. October 31-November 2, 2025. Salome, AZ. Linda Darland 928-671-0474 for info. Salome Lions Club - Fiddle shows and lots of jamming - Dry RV Parking (Donations appreciated) Friday Lunch - Saturday Breakfast and Dinner.

Wickenburg Contest and Bluegrass Festival November 6-9, 2025. Bowman Arena.



Duane, Kris, Janet, Bettie and Frank recently performed in Yuma (K.R. Nightengale photo)



Arline ready to play!

Upcoming Events

2026 Events

Worthen Memorial Contest. January 9-11, 2026. Yuma, AZ. Silver Spur Rodeo Clubhouse
2577 E. County 14th

Salome FiddleFest. TBA, 2026. Salome, AZ. Linda Darland 928-671-0474 for info.

Grande Fiddle Championship. TBA, 2026. Casa Grande, AZ. Tiffany my7gems@cox.net

Bluegrass Roundup. January 30-February 1, 2026.. Rodeo Grounds. Apache Junction, AZ.

Ajo Contest. February 6-8, 2026. Ajo, AZ. Ajo Country Club

Matheson Music Festival. February 12-16, 2026. Graham County Fairgrounds. Safford, AZ

Tucson Contest February 21, 2026. Southern AZ Dance Center 4801 E 29th St. Tucson, AZ.

Lake Havasu Bluegrass March 6-8. Lake Havasu City, AZ. Lake Havasu State Park.

Salome FiddleFest TBA 2026. Salome, AZ. Linda Darland 928-671-0474 for info.

AOTFA Events List See Arizona Old Time Fiddle Association Webpage

State Fiddle Contest *Date Change*

The Arizona State Fiddle Contest 2025 (J.W. & Vertielee Floyd Memorial Old Time Fiddlers Contest) will be held in conjunction with the Gila County Fair. Dates are **September 4-6, 2025**, and it will be held at the Events Center (Rodeo Grounds) on the south edge of Payson, AZ.

Cottonwood Chapter

The Cottonwood Chapter will be meeting at Fran Judd's house on the 3rd Sunday from 1-5. Address is 1495 Abbey Rd Cottonwood AZ Call Fran Judd 928-634-1963 for information.

**NEWSLETTER ITEMS DEADLINE is 20th of the Month.
August 20th for the September Newsletter.**

Noreen Johnston keeps picture albums of the fiddle events. If you have pictures you would like to share, please send them to Noreen by email, text or regular mail. fiddlerslady@aol.com
Mailing address on Page 8 of this newsletter.

Happy July 4



Independence Day!

ED JOHNSTON 50 Year AOTFA Member

Ed Johnston was born on February 15, 1942 in Bridgeport (Cottonwood), Arizona. He grew up in Cornville, Arizona. He attended school in Cornville, Cottonwood, and Mingus Union High School.

Occupation: Truck driver. He had his own business moving mobile homes for 14 years. He cowboyed on a ranch for a while. He even was a mule wrangler at the Grand Canyon for 2 seasons, 1983 & 1984. He drove truck for Empire Transport from Flagstaff AZ to Black Mesa mine in northern AZ for 14 years and was awarded Safe Driver of the Year for 2007, 2008, and 2009. Ed was also awarded Driver of the Year in 2006.

Profession: Jack of all trades. He loved hunting, camping, playing cowboy golf, building things and playing his fiddle. He was a member of the Arizona Old Time Fiddlers Association since 1976. He helped start the Cottonwood Chapter, He was inducted to the AOTFA Hall of Fame in 2009.

Ed is survived by Noreen, his wife of 65 years, son Darell Johnston (Tammy), 2 grand children, Craig and Jacque Johnston, and 5 great grand children. He was preceded in death by son Curtis Johnston, in 2008. He passed away May 28, 2025.

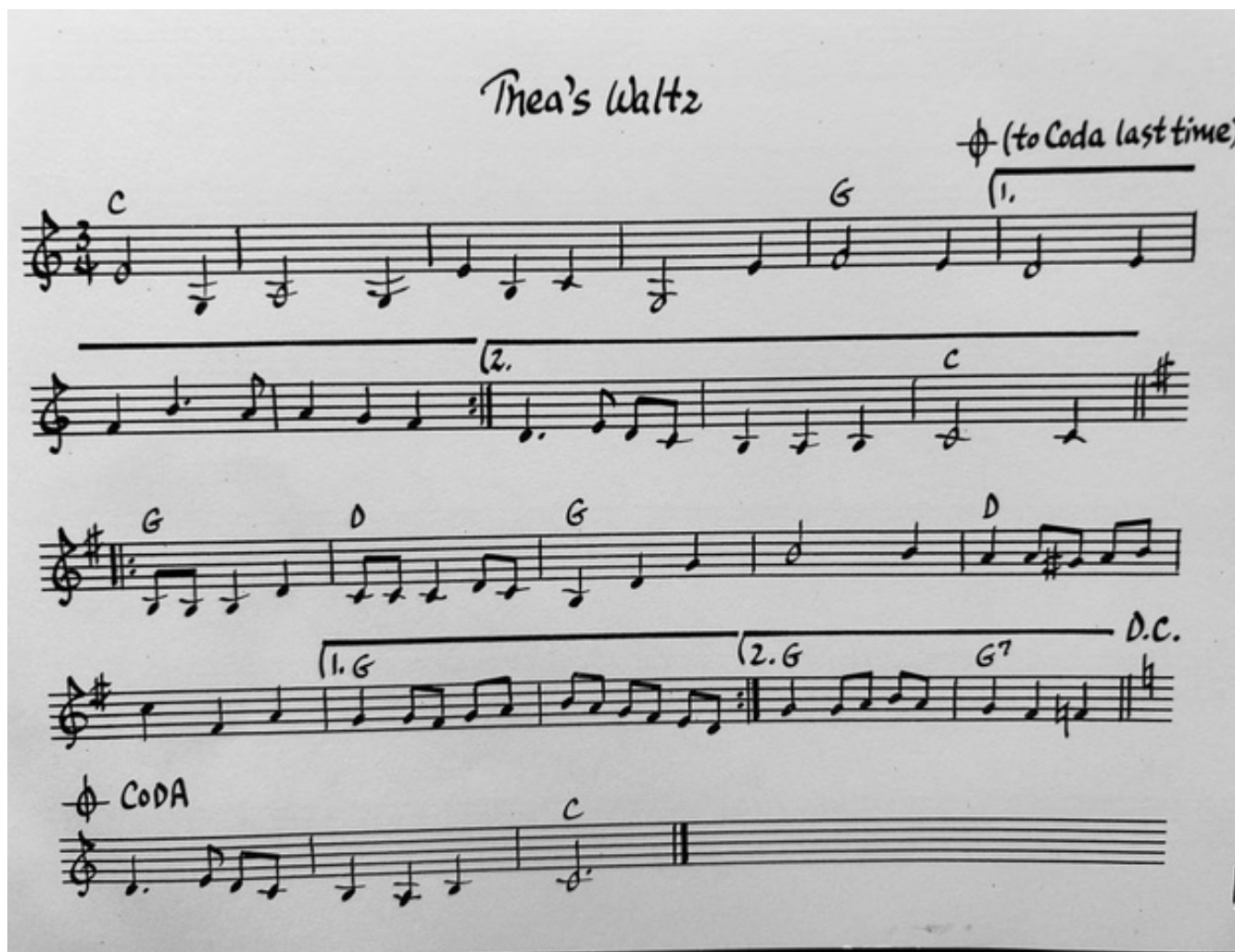
A Celebration of Life will be July 26, 2025 at Noreen's house at 696 South Maricopa Street in Chino Valley, Arizona.



Ed Johnston

Thea's Waltz

This tune was generously provided by fiddler **Beth Rotto** from Decorah, Iowa. She has collected and recorded tunes from the Upper Midwest. She provides interesting history and background below. You can see and hear **Beth playing Thea's Waltz** on YouTube.



Johan Arndt (Mostad)(1833-1909) left Norway where he was celebrated as a fiddler from a well known musical family, and came to northeast Iowa where he brought life, energy and culture to his new neighbors with his fiddle. **Thea Arndt (Clark)**(1874-1967) was his youngest child and the apple of his eye and she took after him musically. At age seven, she attracted attention by fiddling for house parties, especially since she played left-handed or “backwards.” She was also the first organist at her rural church, when a reed organ was procured. Since she was still too short to reach the pedals, her father pumped the bellows for her. After she married and had five children, she didn’t have as much time to devote to music, but she kept her father’s handwritten tune books and passed them to her musical granddaughter.

Some of those tunes were brought to life in a concert in 2021 called "Foot-Notes & Friends Play the Music of Johan Arndt Mostad- Lost Tunes from a Norwegian Immigrant's Notebooks." This concert may be watched for free on the Vesterheim Museum YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2uy6o2lpGg>

There have been many talented women and girl fiddlers in Norwegian American communities since immigration began, although their stories are not widely known. Expectations were that women should concentrate on being good housewives and mothers and that took a lot of time and energy. They often found little time to pursue their musical interests, but they were here! Some played for themselves and their family while others traveled within their community to provide entertainment and instruction. Fortunately, women fiddlers are more widely represented these days.

Thea's Waltz is a tune collected by fiddler **Beth Hoven Rotto** from one of Thea's granddaughters and is found on the CD *My Father Was a Fiddler*. . . . The CD contains dance tunes collected in northeast Iowa from descendants of the area's early fiddlers and performed by the **Foot-Notes** band in the Norwegian-American style. The CD and a companion tunebook containing melody line and chords for all instrumental selections can be purchased by contacting the Vesterheim Museum Store at <https://store.vesterheim.org/collections/music-movies> or by calling (563) 382-9682.



*Linda and Mary in the audience
at Salome*



*Good Advice!
At Salome Lions Club*

Contest Results

Western Idaho Contest May 3, 2025 (Meridian, ID)

Starr McMullen 1st and Martin Fewkes 2nd in Senior

Carla Fewkes 4th and Martin Fewkes 6th in Accompanist

Emily Fewkes 3rd in Junior Junior and Leah Fewkes 5th in Small Fry

Fiddlers on the Peak May 9-10, 2025 (Stevens County, Washington)

Janet Shelby 1st in Seniors and JayDean Ludiker 1st in Open

International Peace Garden Contest June 7, 2025 (Dunseith, North Dakota)

Katie Bonn 1st and Laura Barry 2nd In Seniors

National Old Time Fiddle Contest Weiser, ID June 2025			
Small Fry 1 Isley Dietrich 2 Lincoln Landon 3 Lainey Rae Walrath 4 Hadley Walrath 5 Gracie Teeter	Adult 1 Jaclyn Sites 2 Tim Hodgson 3 Aaron Fewkes 4 Vi Wickam 5 Brian Maney	Twin Fiddle Adult 1 Libby Rogers/ Jaidynn Lee 2 Shelby Murdock/ Maggie Wight 3 Eliza Beck/ Rachel Beck 4 Monte Gaylord/ Tashina Lindley 5 Vi Wickam/ Dennis Ludiker	Grand Champion 1 Ridge Roberts 2 Dennis Ludiker 3 Jesse Quintana 4 Tashina Lindley 5 Celeste Johnson
Junior-Junior 1 Chloe Nicolayeff 2 Sawyer Dietrich 3 Britton Green 4 Emily Fewkes 5 Mason Ludiker	Senior 1 Tim Carter 2 Linda Relph 3 JayDean Ludiker 4 Jeanine Orme 5 Sheila Wright	Twin 17 & Under 1 Jesse Quintana/ Ranelle Dietrich 2 Ella Alkire/ Lucy Alkire 3 Kimber Farmer/ Stella Smith	Accompanist 1 Ben LiaBraaten 2 Rod Anderson 3 Hyatt Hopkins 4 Darin Meeks 5 Jetta Brooks
Junior 1 Max Francis 2 Ranelle Dietrich 3 Thomas Paskvan 4 Tristan Paskvan 5 Luke Eggert	Senior-Senior 1 John Francis 2 Aaron Lowe 3 Mabel Vogt 4 Eileen Walter 5 Vincent Crofts	Swing Adult 1 Monte Gaylord 2 Celeste Johnson 3 Ariea Forbes Prater 4 Vi Wickam 5 Nancy Padilla	Swing 17 & Under 1 Max Francis 2 Jesse Quintana 3 Rachel Beck 4 Isley Dietrich 5 Mason Ludiker
Young Adult 1 Justin Sherfey 2 Shelby Murdoch 3 Danielle Meeks 4 Emile Miller 5 Shira Ellisman			



***JayDean, Debbie, Janet, Janene,
Carla, Katie, and Jan.
Weiser June 2025***



***Brie, Sawyer and Ranelle at
Yuma 2025***



***Darwin at Salome
Fiddlefest***

A Fiddle Made For Me

A Stainer of Strad we really don't care
Maple and spruce and bow made of hair
It's carved to perfection the scroll curls around
And when it is played oh what a sound
Four little strings G D A and E
Wound from the pegs ever so tightly
A hobby, a passion, a need to express
My fiddle was made to relieve all my stress.

By Martin Fewkes 2004

The Arizona Fiddler

Membership, Renewal or Change of Address

Annual Dues \$15 Family. Over 80 \$10 Includes Partner

Please Print

Name _____

SummerAddress _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

If Different

Winter Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(Optional) Man's Birthday _____ Lady's Birthday _____

Anniversary _____ Year _____

Children Under 18 Living at Home _____

Chapters

☐ Rim Country	Payson Area
☐ SAOTF	Tucson Area
☐ Territorial	Yuma Area
☐ Verde Valley	Cottonwood Area
☐ Independent	Anywhere

Members may join one Principal chapter and one associate chapter.

Send dues to Noreen Johnston, Membership Secretary
696 S Maricopa Street
Chino Valley, AZ 86323

AOTFA
14210 W. Kiowa Trail
Surprise AZ 85374

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