

Bows and strings

Tulsa State Fair hosts state's fiddler championship

By **ELLIOT BUTAY**
Satellite Correspondent

The creaks and clanks of a rickety roller coaster and the screams of vendors are all common at the Tulsa State Fair.

But amidst the aroma of live-stock and all things deep-fried arises the sound of a 34-year tradition.

And it sounds like fiddles — bows sawing mercilessly across strings and sound crying forth from holes in finely crafted wood.

The 34th annual Oklahoma State Fiddlers Championships were held Saturday at the Budweiser Beer Garden at the Tulsa State Fair.

Fiddle admirers and people who just wanted a place to sit down and eat watched 7-year-olds to 75-year-olds compete for the titles of Junior or Open State Fiddle Champion.

About 30 years ago, the contest had a 14-year-old winner by the name of Mark O'Connor. O'Connor is now a world-renowned fiddler and violinist who played Sept. 29 and 30 with the Signature Symphony at the Tulsa Community College Van Trease Performing Arts Center.

This year's event was kicked off by the "first lady of country fiddle," Janae, playing a couple of upbeat tunes for the pleasure of the crowd.

Howls, hoots and an energetic "Come on!" were heard as Jae's tunes grew more intense and altogether fun. Jae holds her own fiddle camp and competition in Grove every year, and she has



Courtesy

The 34th annual Oklahoma State Fiddlers Championships were held Saturday at the Tulsa State Fair. Contestants could compete in the junior and open division.

Jae was a judge in the Oklahoma State Championships for many years. Jae may be best known for her role as a performer on the popular country variety show "Hee Haw."

After the other judges had played some tunes, the competition got underway, starting with the 15 and under junior division.

Contestants were to play three tunes; a hoedown, which was a fast, energetic tune; a waltz, which tended to be slower and more melancholy and traditionally meant for couples dancing; and finally a tune of the competitor's choice, which never failed to be a lively, fast-fingered piece.

So that the judges could not identify the contestants, the judges were in a separate shed behind the stage and the competitors were named only by number. To avoid recognition, en-

trants also were not allowed to speak during his or her performance.

The Pendleton sisters, Emma-Jane, 13, and Marina, 12, started being trained in classical violin. When Jae, who attends the same church as the Pendletons, saw the two play, she suggested the girls take on the fiddle.

The girls played magnificently and showed the crowd why they have a standing gig at the Spotlight Theatre every month.

They also impressed the judges as Marina took third place honors and Emma placed second.

However, the championship trophy went to 12-year-old Jake Duncan, who has been playing for only three years.

After a short break, the open competition began.

"There are some of the greatest fiddlers in the world here,"

said emcee Bob Fjeldsted. Fjeldsted is president of the Oklahoma Fiddle Association Northeast Chapter, and founder and executive director of the new National Fiddler Hall of Fame, which will soon be built in Tulsa.

The fiddle is the official instrument of Oklahoma and it's not hard to find people who enjoy it. Spectator Loretta Day enjoyed her fourth trip to this competition.

"It's all about the fiddling — it's not about looking cute," Day said. "You could plow a field and then come up and play."

When the open division was narrowed down to five, the competition really heated up.

Thirteen-year-old Doug Thompson took the stage as the last of the five and one of the youngest in the open division.

His brother, Michael, placed fourth in the junior division.

After the final score cards were turned, the prizes were distributed: The top prize of \$750 went to 29-year-old David Gaylord, who has been fiddling for all but three of those years. Fiddling is also a family affair with him, as his brother Monte Gaylord came in fourth place.

"It feels great. It's a great place to be here today," David Gaylord said. "It'd be nicer in the air conditioning."

Fjeldsted said, "This music is part of the blood. You'll get infected, if you haven't already."

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Study seeks ways to help teen moms lose weight

By **CHERYL WITTENAUER**
Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Before she became a teen mom, Emma Richardson played high school sports and wore a size 8.

But 27 months after daughter Kayla's birth, Richardson feels stuck in a size 16 body, forced to wear "older people's clothes" instead of the hot styles for her generation.

"I feel fat," the 18-year-old high school junior said. "Like a bear in hibernation."

Richardson, 5-foot-4 and 180 pounds, would like to lose weight but said her busy schedule doesn't allow for basketball or for reading food labels, so her "belly and hips" aren't budging.

Researchers at St. Louis University School of Public Health hope to help young women like Richardson lose weight gained during pregnancy. The school's Obesity Prevention Center has a five-year, \$3.5 million grant from the National Cancer Institute to study how best to do that.

The university and its St. Louis-based partner, Parents as Teachers, will test the effectiveness of various strategies on 1,900 overweight teen moms in nine states — Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Delaware, Michigan, Mississippi, South Carolina and Texas.

The strategies combine diet and exercise and emphasize how small changes in behavior can reap big results, said Debra Haire-Joshu, principal investigator and obesity center director.

The study — the first of its kind — will focus on overweight single moms of all racial groups,

ages 15 to 18.

Each woman must be enrolled in Parents as Teachers, an international program that helps educate parents about early childhood development, health and other issues.

The young women will be advised to drink water and low-fat milk instead of soft drinks, and to replace junk food with pretzels, fruit and fresh vegetables. They'll learn to limit portion size, read food labels, and to walk, take the stairs, and get up off the couch.

Internet chat rooms and message boards will be set up as a support network. The curriculum and strategies will be based in part on the obstacles teen moms identify in national focus groups set to begin in February, research coordinator Amanda Harrod said.

The program will be evaluated after two years, and its most effective strategies will be promoted nationally through Parents as Teachers.

"If we don't intervene now, we'll see (health problems) when they're 30," Haire-Joshu said.

Retaining weight after childbirth is a predictor of developing long-term obesity, as well as other diseases, she added. Overweight teens are more than 12 times more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes in their lifetime, and are also at risk for colorectal and breast cancer, Haire-Joshu said.

On the Net:
Obesity Prevention Center:
<http://www.slu.edu/centers/opc/>
Parents as Teachers:
<http://www.parentsasteachers.org/site/pp.aspx?c>

The return of 'Nobody's Watching' — maybe

By **RIK PORTER**
Zap2it.com

The creators and stars of "Nobody's Watching" got to be part of a feel-good story when NBC agreed to redevelop the show thanks to the pilot's phenomenal success on YouTube.

Now comes the hard part: Figuring out how to keep that out-of-nowhere momentum going online, while at the same time working on a way to make the leap from the Internet to broadcast television.

"The problem is that it's got to retain some edginess," says Bill Lawrence, who co-created "Nobody's Watching" with his fellow "Scrubs" writers Neil Goldman and Garrett Donovan. "If it becomes a homogenized corporate product — which anything that goes through the network system does — we're doomed."

To review: Lawrence et al make the "Nobody's Watching" pilot for The WB in 2005. It's not picked up despite positive buzz. With The WB dying, someone posts it to YouTube in June of this year. After a little publicity, several hundred thousand people view it, and the feedback is hugely positive. NBC orders six scripts in July and gives the show money to play around online.

A "Nobody's Watching" Web site launched this week (www.nobodyswatching.tv), with links to several videos starring Derrick (Taran Killam) and Will (Paul Campbell), TV-obsessed best

friends who, after the failure of their WB show-within-the-show last year, have been kicking around Los Angeles.

They have, however, managed to get on camera as "valets" at the Emmys, played "24" around their apartment and done their own experiments with Mentos and various beverages. The site also contains forums in which people can suggest ideas for more webisodes and a "Backlash" board, which thus far has very little backlash. (One user did "out" Derrick and Will as fic-

tional characters, something that was news to no one else and has drawn a good amount of ridicule.)

What it doesn't have are any links to NBC; nor does NBC link to it. That's by design, Lawrence says.

"We're still shooting guerrilla stuff on our own that we're not clearing with them legally. We're just going to be putting it on various sites we have access to," Lawrence says. "Because this thing got a little buzz, all these sites are very cool to us."

NBC has ordered six scripts from the "Nobody's Watching" writers, and it has signed Killam and Campbell to holding deals. The network has to decide whether to greenlight production of the show by February. Until then, Will and Derrick will continue to do their thing.

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