



Junior Hoedownner

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My name is Sawyer Olsen. I am nine years old and I have lived in Kodiak, Alaska my whole life. I was born there. I am in the fourth grade. Besides violin, my hobbies are playing football, baseball, ice skating, acting in theater productions, and berry picking. Kodiak is an island and my house is on a cliff overlooking the ocean. I like to play at the beach practically every day! I like playing Brain Age Academy on Nintendo DS. Gary Paulsen is my favorite author. I am on several teams in Kodiak, such as Kodiak King Fishers Swim Team and the Junior Soccer Team. I love running and have been running since I was six. I like competing in 5k races and also competed in a triathlon one day before my ninth birthday. I enjoy sports of all kinds.

I started playing violin when I was little. My mom began taking me to Suzuki violin lessons when I was four. My first teacher was Betsy Myrick. I played a cardboard violin. My dad took me to lessons with my next teacher, Meri Holden. She taught me fiddle and Suzuki songs. My Grandpa Ben and Grandma Hazel own Ardinger's Music Store, they gave me my first real 1/10 size violin, and have given me my new violins ever since. I now play a 1/2 size. I enjoy playing for my Grandma and Grandpa. They usually dance in my living room while my little sister, Annie, runs and dances around us. My

grandma cries when I play, she is so happy. Her favorite song is, Jolie Blonde.

I went to my first Suzuki violin camp in Forest Grove, Oregon at Pacific University when I was five years old. The following two summers I attended Suzuki Camp at George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon. The fun thing about those camps is we lived in the dorms. Last summer we went to San Diego, California and I did the Mark O'Conner Fiddle Camp. That is when I started getting into fiddling and playing different kinds of music besides classical. In Kodiak I am a member of the Fiddle Heads and a member of the Youth Orchestra. I have had many different teachers, but my newest teacher is Connie Dunnington and her husband Rich who plays back up guitar. Miss Connie is teaching me songs for next years contest in Weiser. She has been patient teaching me songs that I have trouble with like, Cattle in the Cane. Mr. Rich is the best back-up guitarist, I like playing with him.

This year I joined OOTFA and WOTFA since I spend a lot of time in both Oregon and Washington during the summers. I have participated in several different types of fiddling activities. My first camp was in Kittitas, Washington. My teacher was Mabel Vogt, she taught me twelve new tunes! I played in the square dance and performed

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playing, Wizards Walk and Swallow Tail Jig. It was exciting getting up there and playing in front of all those people. It felt warm. The second camp I went to was in Sunriver, Oregon. My teacher was Judy McGarvey. My favorite song I learned was Bullfrog Blues. The last jam session was in Winchester Bay, Oregon. I got to meet Lew Holt, past president of OOTFA and fiddle with lots of people. If you haven't gone to a fiddle camp or jam session, you should try it. You get to learn new songs, jam with a lot of people, and see new sights. It is a blast!

Red River Valley

Red River Valley is a cowboy's love song that originated in Canada with the Red River of the north. It has become a traditional American tune. The song was honored when it also became a story of the Red River between Oklahoma and Texas. Notice how much the double stops in Version II add to the sound. Nearly continuous use of drone strings is referred to as 'keeping a full fiddle.' It is simple tune, perhaps you already know it. It is an often-requested tune by "older folks."